

Abstract Submitted
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An Insider's View of the Role of Science and Scientists in Public Policy ANDREW ZWICKER, Princeton Plasma Physics Lab — In many ways, advances in fusion energy sciences and the amount of federal funding received are a case study of how the perception of a scientific endeavor can have a greater influence than actual scientific advances. Clearly, outreach by scientists to both legislators and the general public has a critical role in modifying this perception. This might include presenting current research results to the general public, advising an elected official on a piece of legislation, arguing for an increase in science funding, and more. As a new member of the NJ General Assembly, and as the first physicist ever elected to the NJ Legislature, I have had an opportunity to witness first hand how non-scientists judge science funding, scientists, and scientific advances. As expected, this can be based upon a lack of understanding of how science is conducted rather than results. There is no doubt that there is a clear need for scientists as policy advisors at all levels of government. I will discuss the importance of crosspollination between science and public policy and my experiences during my first year in public office, including my work to create a science fellowship similar to the APS/AAAS Congressional fellowship in the NJ Statehouse.

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