

CaSE briefing in advance of the debate on motions establishing select committees 25th June 2009

Science and Technology Committee

The Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE) strongly supports the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills (IUSS) Committee's report on the *Future of science scrutiny following the merger of DIUS and BERR*, which called for the Leader of the House to put forward a standing order to establish a Science and Technology Committee.¹

The House of Commons' Science and Technology Committee was abolished in 2007 following the creation of DIUS. CaSE was against the move as was the previous Science and Technology Committee.² There is strong support for reestablishing a Science and Technology Committee, because:

- The IUSS Committee has been unable to scrutinise science policy across government due to its departmental remit. Expanding the IUSS Committee's remit to include business issues would severely limit both the scope and frequency of inquiries on science and engineering issues within the House of Commons.
- The cross-departmental nature of science policy is reflected within government through the Government Office for Science and the Cabinet committee on Science and Innovation. The House of Commons should have an analogous setup that allows for cross-departmental scrutiny.
- The former Science and Technology Committee was able to look at issues that cut across the boundaries of individual government departments as well as scrutinising science funding and advice. It was also extremely important in promoting informed debate on science and technology issues facing society and policymakers.
- Reestablishing the Science and Technology Committee would strengthen the role of Parliament in scrutinising science and technology policies across government.

Further information

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Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE) is a policy advocate for science and engineering in the UK. CaSE is supported by its members, which includes individuals, corporations, universities and learned societies. Further information on CaSE can be found on our website:

<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk>

¹ Science and Technology Committee, Last Report, October 2007

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmsctech/1108/1108.pdf>

² IUSS Committee, Future of science scrutiny, June 2009

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmselect/cmdius/662/662.pdf>