

d e d i c a t i o n  
*to the Technology Assessment Board*

“The Office of Technology Assessment shall consist of a Technology Assessment Board (hereinafter referred to as the ‘Board’) which shall formulate and promulgate the policies of the Office,.....” (P.L. 92-484 § 3b). This Board, appointed by the leadership of the House and Senate, and consisting of six Senators and six Representatives equally divided by party, has been a unique and vital element of OTA since 1972, the year the Office was established and a Board first appointed. The Board’s first meeting on April 10, 1973, preceded the receipt of funding for OTA in November 1973 and the beginning of operations in January 1974. Traditionally, OTA Annual Reports have not contained a separate section exclusively devoted to the Board. OTA’s last Annual Report, however, would not be complete without recognition of this group of men and women who formed the continuing, integral core of the Office.

[▲]Certain congressional agencies may fall under the jurisdiction of one or another Committee or Joint Committee of Congress; but no agency except OTA has enjoyed the kind of equally bipartisan, close supervision, oversight, guidance and support given by the Board. The management and staff of OTA came to place great value and trust in the work of the Board and pride in the dedication of the Board and willingness of its members to attend meetings and spend time on the affairs of the Office. This was not a figurehead or rubber stamp group, nor were they, as they proved in the last year, fair-weather friends.

[▲]At the first meeting on April 10, 1973, the Board consisted of Senators Edward Kennedy, Ernest Hollings, Hubert Humphrey, Clifford Case, Peter Dominick, and Richard Schweicker and Representatives John Davis, Morris Udall, Charles Mosher, Charles Gubser, Olin Teague and Marvin Esch. Other Members of Congress who served on the Board, some such as Senator Ted Stevens for close to twenty years, were Senators Howard Cannon, Dave Durenberger, Charles Mathias, Jr., and Adlai Stevenson and Representatives Cooper Evans, James Harvey, Marjorie Holt, Joan Horn, Mike McCormick, Clarence Miller, Don Sundquist,

Larry Winn, and John Wydler. OTA's last Board meeting was held on October 13, 1995, at which time the Board consisted of two original members, Senators Kennedy and Hollings, and Senators Orrin Hatch, Charles Grassley and Claiborne Pell and Representatives Amo Houghton, Mike Oxley, George Brown, Jr., John Dingell and Jim McDermott. The members of OTA's Board were distinguished and thoughtful legislators, often Committee Chairmen or Ranking Minorities. They sought to join the Board and, with few exceptions, enjoyed and continued their service as long as they remained in office. They functioned in an exceptionally constructive and cordial spirit of bipartisanship toward the improvement of OTA and the provision of quality information and analysis to the Congress.

[▲] Domestic and international observers of technology assessment and the U.S. political scene have asked about the Board's role during this last year in pressing the case for OTA as a continuing intellectual resource to the Congress and the Nation. Without exception Board members spoke out publically at Appropriations Committee hearings, to the news media and on the floor of the House and Senate and privately in offices, hallways, conferences and caucuses to other Members of Congress. Representative Houghton and Senators Hollings, Hatch, and Kennedy introduced, with Representative Vic Fazio and Senator Ted Stevens, and others, amendments to fund OTA in the House and Senate. Led by Chairman Amo Houghton, the Board, Republicans and Democrats alike, communicated a clear and sincere commitment to the words and concepts of OTA's enabling statute, P.L. 92-484, and followed up through the final Conference Committee decision, by word and deed earning the lasting gratitude and respect of OTA staff.