Mr. President, since the Manhattan project, national

laboratory scientists have performed an inherently unique governmental

function of not only designing and producing nuclear weapons, but

analyzing intelligence on foreign nuclear weapons and nuclear

technology.

In performing this governmental function, the national laboratory

scientists have staffed the Joint Atomic Intelligence Committee, which

produces strategic assessments on foreign nuclear weapons programs,

helped produce technical assessments of foreign nuclear weapons, and

provided critical technical support in disabling improvised nuclear

devices, which in today's post-9/11 environment is one of our greatest

fears. In many cases these functions are performed through rotational

assignments to the intelligence community staff.

The amendment I have offered today, and cosponsored by my colleague

Senator Domenici, preserves this rotational capability in the

intelligence reforms proposed by Senators Collins and Lieberman.

Typically, national laboratory personnel can be detailed to the

intelligence community, or any Federal agency, through the

Intergovernmental Personnel Act. This act permits employees of

federally funded research and development centers, FFRDCs, to act for

set periods of time, as staff of a Government agency.

This amendment does not alter the authorities under the act. What

this amendment does is reinforce the congressional intent, that in

addition to the authorities granted to the National Intelligence

Authority to staff its centers with personnel from other branches of

the Government, that it continue to be able to utilize the unique

capabilities of Department of Energy staff and other FFRDCs.