



May 19, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bart Gordon
Chairman
House Science and Technology Committee
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ralph Hall
Ranking Member
House Science and Technology Committee
H3-394 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Boehner, Chairman Gordon, and Ranking Member Hall:

In our May 7 letter to you, the members of the Task Force on American Innovation, a coalition of leading innovation companies, both large and small, universities, and scientific societies, expressed our strong support for passage of H.R. 5116, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010. We are writing to you again to express our deep concern at the turn of events that now threatens bipartisan approval of this measure.

As we noted in our previous letter, the 2007 COMPETES Act provided the nation with a broad blueprint for strengthening the pillars of American innovation and competitiveness: basic research in science and engineering, STEM education, and an innovation-friendly business environment. These initiatives were based upon the recommendations of the landmark National Academies' report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm."

The reauthorization of COMPETES deserves broad-based, bipartisan support, just as the original COMPETES legislation received in 2007. This includes the funding levels approved by the Science and Technology Committee to continue doubling funding for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology laboratories, as well as funding to strengthen ARPA-E.

Reducing budget deficits and slowing the growth of our national debt are essential to the nation's long-term economic well-being. And history has shown that investments in science and education lead to new industries and produce the kind of high-value jobs and economic growth essential to reducing budget deficits. Businesses never stop investing in their future. Our nation would be wise to heed this fundamental wisdom.

Investing in American innovation has been a bipartisan priority in Congress, and two successive Administrations from opposite parties have supported initiatives to strengthen it. If we allow partisan provisions, amendments, or other actions to undermine bipartisan support for reauthorizing COMPETES, this generation and future generations will pay the price. The Task Force on American Innovation strongly urges both parties to refrain from partisanship in this debate and to join together in passing the COMPETES reauthorization.

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Sincerely,

The Task Force on American Innovation

Agilent Technologies
Alliance for Science & Technology Research in America
American Chemical Society
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
American Institute of Physics
American Mathematical Society
American Physical Society
American Society for Engineering Education
American Statistical Association
Applied Materials, Inc.
ASME
Association for Computing Machinery
Association of American Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Battelle
Business Roundtable
Computing Research Association
Computing Technology Industry Association
Council on Competitiveness
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology
Google, Inc.
IBM Corporation
Infineon Technologies
Innovation Advocates
Intel Corporation
IEEE-USA
Luna Innovations, Inc.
Materials Research Society
Microsoft Corp.
National Association of Manufacturers
National Center for Women & Information Technology
National Inventors Hall of Fame
National User Facility Organization
Northrop Grumman Corp.
Procter & Gamble Company
Science Coalition
Semiconductor Industry Association
Semiconductor Research Corporation
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
Southeastern Universities Research Association
Technology CEO Council
Telecommunications Industry Association
Texas Instruments Incorporated