



TASK FORCE ON AMERICAN INNOVATION

Aerospace Industries Association
Agilent Technologies
Alliance for Science & Technology Research in America
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Astronomical Society
American Chemical Society
American Geophysical Union
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
Association of University Research Parks
Autodesk
The Babcock & Wilcox Company
Battelle
Business Roundtable
Center for Policy on Emerging Technologies
Computing Research Association
Computing Technology Industry Association
Council for Chemical Research
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Scientific Society Presidents
Council on Competitiveness
Cray Inc.
Dow Chemical Company
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology
The Geological Society of America
Google, Inc.
IBM Corporation
IEEE-USA
IPC - Association Connecting Electronics Industries
Industrial Research Institute
Infineon Technologies
Information Technology Industry Council
Innovation Advocates
Intel Corporation
Jellen Ventures
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Materials Research Society
Microsoft Corporation
National Association of Manufacturers
National Center for Manufacturing Sciences
National Center for Women & Information Technology
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Northrop Grumman Corp.
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Qualcomm
SEMI
Semiconductor Industry Association
Semiconductor Research Corporation
Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
Southeastern Universities Research Association
TechAmerica
TechNet
Technology CEO Council
Telecommunications Industry Association
Texas Instruments Incorporated

June 28, 2016

The Honorable Cory Gardner
Committee on Commerce, Science, &
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Gary Peters
Committee on Commerce, Science, &
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Gardner and Peters:

The Task Force on American Innovation (TFAI), a coalition of companies, university associations and professional societies that support sustained and robust federal investment in scientific research, applauds your efforts to draft the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act. We believe this bipartisan legislation marks an important step in our nation's ability to lay claim to leadership in innovation.

In recent years, other nations have significantly increased their R&D funding, while U.S. investments have remained relatively stagnant. Without a renewed commitment to scientific research investments, our nation risks creating a deepening innovation deficit, which could cost us our ability to compete globally, to bolster our economy and to safeguard our national security.

The TFAI has advocated multi-year authorizations that provide a strong, predictable funding path for science agencies, and it encourages the Committee to address the need for longer-term authorizations in future legislation. The TFAI notes that the current bill would provide an increase of less than one percent for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in FY17, matching the appropriation level currently moving through the Senate. That increase falls far short of the level our nation needs to be the global innovation leader. By contrast, for FY18, the bill would provide the NSF and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) with a four percent increase, not including inflation. Such a funding level would set a reasonable FY18 target for these two key research agencies. It is close to the level identified in a recent call to action endorsed by more than 500 businesses, universities, scientific societies, and national organizations, *Innovation: An American Imperative*, which urges four percent real annual increases in funding for key federal research agencies.

The TFAI is also encouraged by this bill's reaffirmation of the merit-based peer review process for selecting research projects and the provisions that seek to alleviate significant regulatory burdens on research scientists. Similarly, the provisions to promote technology transfer, commercialization, and manufacturing would help strengthen the movement of ideas from the lab to the marketplace. All of those provisions would help maximize the return on taxpayer's investment in scientific research.

As you continue to engage with your colleagues in both the Senate and House, we urge you to emphasize robust funding increases for NSF, NIST, and the Department of Energy Office of Science, each of which significantly contributes to American innovation.

Thank you for bringing forward this important legislation. We are eager to continue working with you on these issues.

Sincerely,

Task Force on American Innovation

www.innovationtaskforce.org