



# 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  
Luna Innovations, Inc.  
Materials Research Society  
Microsoft Corporation  
National Association of Manufacturers  
National Center for Manufacturing Sciences  
National Center for Women & Information Technology  
National User Facility Organization  
Northrop Grumman Corp.  
Procter & Gamble Company  
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