



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 5, 2015

Senator Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate

Senator John Cornyn
Majority Whip
United States Senate

Senator Lamar Alexander
Chairman
United States Senate

Senator Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
United States Senate

Senator John Thune
Chairman
United States Senate

Senator Cory Gardner
United States Senate

Senator Christopher Coons
United States Senate

Senator Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate

Senator Dick Durbin
Assistant Minority Leader
United States Senate

Senator Patty Murray
Ranking Member
United States Senate

Senator Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
United States Senate

Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
United States Senate

Senator Gary Peters
United States Senate

Dear Senators:

The Task Force on American Innovation, a coalition of businesses and business organizations, scientific societies, and university organizations that advocates for robust funding for scientific research at key federal agencies, including the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Energy (DOE), and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), writes to express our views on the reauthorization of the America COMPETES Act. We also write to express the Task Force's support for S. 1398, introduced recently by Senators Lamar Alexander and Chris Coons.

This coalition strongly believes that our nation's global leadership in innovation enhances its strategic advantage, powers the economy, strengthens our competitiveness, and improves Americans' quality of life. Based on the groundbreaking report, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, the COMPETES Act, enacted in 2007 and reauthorized in 2010 under a Republican and then a Democratic President, established a national vision for scientific research and innovation with the goal of maintaining our nation's global leadership role. As competitor nations are increasing their investments in scientific research, the U.S. would benefit greatly from similar investments in research. Placing a low priority on research will lead to an innovation deficit, and compromise our role as the global innovation leader.

As the Senate seeks to reauthorize the America COMPETES Act, we believe such legislation should:

- make a strong statement that sustained, robust funding across all disciplines of basic scientific research is a top national priority, without forcing damaging tradeoffs among fields of science;
- set targets that provide for steady and sustained real growth in funding for all of the major federal research agencies covered by the legislation (the National Science Foundation, key agencies and programs at the Department of Energy, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology);
- within the context of strong federal support for basic research, ensure that federal science agencies, guided by their scientific advisory committees and boards, continue to set priorities for funding within and among the full range of science disciplines.

S. 1398 is a strong model for a COMPETES reauthorization bill. While it covers research programs only at the Department of Energy, it makes clear that the nation needs strong, sustained investment in scientific research. The Task Force on American Innovation supports this legislation.

While we understand the need to control long-term budget deficits and debt, sequestration-level spending caps under the Budget Control Act have made it extremely difficult to address national priorities such as scientific research, which actually lead to new technologies and advancements that grow the economy. We hope Congress and the President will agree on budget measures that provide the resources needed for investments in research. Regardless, it is important that COMPETES continue to stand as a signpost of our nation's commitment to investment in the discoveries and ideas upon which we build new technologies and develop solutions to our most pressing challenges. We look forward to working with you on these critical issues to maintain America's global innovation leadership.

Sincerely,

Task Force on American Innovation