
**Task Force on American Innovation**

*Securing the future through research in the physical sciences and engineering*

October 26, 2022

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Shalanda D. Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary Raimondo and Director Young:

As you continue to develop the Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 budget for the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), the Task Force on American Innovation (TFAI)—an alliance of industry, professional and scientific societies, and university organizations—writes to strongly urge that it include funding at the levels authorized in the bipartisan NIST for the Future Act, passed as part of the bicameral and bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act of 2022. As you know, this level of investment is necessary to expand and accelerate American research and development (R&D) in key focus areas where U.S. leadership is critical.

NIST works with our nation's businesses and universities to drive American economic growth and job creation. Companies, academic institutions, and other federal agencies rely on Scientific and Technical Research and Services (STRS) programs to provide foundational research and materials development for their products and programs. NIST performs a vital function in supporting America's global competitiveness by aiding businesses to overcome significant technical obstacles. NIST's core measurement science programs, for example, provide calibrations and standards for industry broadly from oil and gas to aerospace and medicine.

NIST's manufacturing programs play a vital role in assisting businesses in every state with technical challenges and access to necessary resources. NIST manufacturing programs provide research and resources to assist industry in growing the key technology needed to maintain US competitiveness. By providing appropriations at the levels authorized in CHIPS, NIST's manufacturing centers can be created throughout the US thus strengthening our economic security.

The agency also plays an essential role in industries of the future, such as quantum science, artificial intelligence (AI), and semiconductor manufacturing, that require foundational measurements and R&D to enable U.S. leadership. In the area of AI, NIST is researching the performance and reliability of AI systems to assist in the development of international standards and increase public trust in these systems, to enable widespread adoption and innovation. NIST has also been tasked with developing an AI accountability framework to ensure ethical, transparent, and accountable use of AI technologies across all sectors. NIST also continues to be a leader in developing cybersecurity standards, and in advanced communications research through its work on 5G, position, navigation, and timing (PNT), and the internet of things (IoT).

Unfortunately, when America last authorized such robust investments in the original COMPETES legislation, true financial follow-through did not materialize. Now more than ever, the United States needs robust and sustained funding in these areas to further strengthen the American STEM workforce, advance innovation, promote economic growth, and maintain national security.

The passage of the CHIPS and Science Act was a necessary first step, and now the significant investments it authorized must be followed by actual appropriations. We urge you to take another important step in the Administration's FY24 budget to bolster NIST's budget.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this recommendation.

Sincerely,

The Task Force on American Innovation

Cc:
Laurie Locascio
Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology