



# 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  
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Business Roundtable  
Center for Policy on Emerging Technologies  
Computing Research Association  
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Council for Chemical Research  
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Cray Inc.  
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The Geological Society of America  
Google, Inc.  
IBM Corporation  
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IPC - Association Connecting Electronics Industries  
Industrial Research Institute  
Infineon Technologies  
Information Technology Industry Council  
Innovation Advocates  
Intel Corporation  
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Materials Research Society  
Microsoft Corporation  
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National Center for Manufacturing Sciences  
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Northrop Grumman Corp.  
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SEMI  
Semiconductor Industry Association  
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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