



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement of Research & Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman Barbara Comstock (R-Va.)
An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Institute of Standards and Technology for Fiscal Year 2017

Chairwoman Comstock: I would first like to thank Dr. Willie May, Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology, for appearing today to discuss the NIST budget request for fiscal year 2017.

This Committee has a long, bipartisan record of support for NIST and its contributions to research and development. As a non-regulatory agency within the Department of Commerce that works closely alongside industry, NIST works to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology.

The fiscal year 2017 budget request for NIST totals \$1 billion, an increase of \$50.5 million or about 5 percent from the fiscal year 2016 enacted level. A large portion of this request is \$730.5 million for NIST's Scientific and Technical Research Services (STRS). The STRS request includes increases for work conducted on measurement science for future computing technologies and applications, advanced sensing for manufacturing, biomanufacturing or engineered biology, addressing spectrum issues, neutron research, and lab to market or technology transfer promoting data sharing efforts.

The requested increases from NIST for FY17 would also be devoted in large part to bolster advanced manufacturing initiatives at NIST. In fact, \$47 million dollars is requested for the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI). This program was authorized by the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014 (RAMI Act), authored by Chairman Lamar Smith and approved by this Committee on a bipartisan basis.

NIST is authorized to use up to \$5 million per year of appropriated funds for FY2015-FY2024, and the Department of Energy is authorized to transfer to NIST up to \$250 million of appropriated funds for that same period of time.

To administer NNMI, the RAMI Act also established strategic direction for the program and rules to assure fair competition for federal dollars. The FY17 request for NNMI is an

88 percent increase from what was appropriated for FY16, and my colleagues and I will be asking questions this morning about that increase and other aspects of NNMI.

We will also learn more today about the Institute's investment in cybersecurity and the NIST Cybersecurity Framework.

As you all know, one of the great challenges of the 21st Century is cybersecurity. This Committee has held multiple hearings on cybersecurity since the news over the summer that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) was the target of two massive data breaches – exposing the sensitive information of over 21 million Americans, including me and many of my constituents.

More recently, we have seen the example of the security breach at the IRS affecting hundreds of thousands of American taxpayers.

Considering the constantly evolving cyber threats and technology, it is imperative that we do everything that we can to protect our citizens. In order to ensure this, NIST plays a very important role by providing guidelines and standards to help reduce cyber risks to federal agencies and critical infrastructure.

Solutions are needed not only to prevent and detect cyber-attacks, but also to bolster rapid-response and recovery. Last week, I joined the Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC) and many stakeholders in my district for a round table discussion. NVTC brings the best minds of the Northern Virginia Technology sector together to promote innovative policies in all sectors and grow our 21st century economy in our region. This is the kind of solutions we need to be working on together with the private sector to develop the programs, hardware, and strategies to make themselves and their customers safer and more secure.

We have a constitutional obligation and a responsibility to ensure every dollar earmarked is spent as effectively and efficiently as possible.

I look forward to and am appreciative of the opportunity to hear from Dr. May on how NIST plans to prioritize and manage funding as well as how it sets its budget. ###