

Opening Statement of R&T Subcommittee Ranking Member Jim Baird at Subcommittee Hearing on NIST FY20 Budget

Apr 9, 2019

Opening Statement

Good morning Chairwoman Stevens. Thank you for convening today's hearing on the Fiscal Year 2020 budget request for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution grants the Congress the power to "fix the Standard of Weight and Measures." Congress created NIST and its predecessor agencies to fulfill that important federal responsibility.

Since 1901 NIST has been at the forefront of setting those standards for the United States, and the world. Almost every federal agency and U.S. industry sector uses the standards, measurements, and certification services that NIST labs provide.

I think many of our constituents may not appreciate how fundamental this work is to our economy and national security. From genetic sequencing to cybersecurity, NIST is at the forefront of advancing innovation.

As new technologies develop and evolve, NIST's services are critical. The President's budget request prioritizes investments in three critical technology areas: quantum information science, microelectronics, and artificial intelligence. These investments will launch discoveries and advances that will significantly affect America's economy in the coming decades. I look forward to hearing more about them today.

NIST also works with small and medium manufacturers to help them compete in the emerging global marketplace for advanced manufacturing. By working with industry and universities, like my alma mater Purdue, NIST is helping U.S.

manufacturers adopt new technologies and processes to overcome shared technical obstacles. The adoption of new technologies is speeding up and improving development, driving efficiencies in production and enabling new business models. I look forward to discussing what the next steps should be for this public-private partnership in manufacturing.

Finally, NIST plays a crucial role in our nation's cybersecurity. NIST provides mandatory guidelines and standards to help reduce cyber risks to federal agencies and critical infrastructure. NIST also provides voluntary standards for the private sector.

One of the great challenges of the 21st Century is cybersecurity. It is imperative that we do everything we can to protect our citizens. The President's budget request prioritizes NIST's cybersecurity work. I hope to learn more about those efforts today.

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

I appreciate that today's hearing gives us the opportunity to fulfill that duty. I thank Dr. Walter Copan for being here today and yield back the balance of my time.