



VIA EMAIL

October 12, 2021

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce
U. S. House of Representatives
2107 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone:

I write today in support of the Supply CHAIN Act and to thank you for your leadership on this key issue, which has bipartisan support. While the United States is blessed with unparalleled talent and financial resources, we must continuously enhance the breadth and depth of the tools and techniques we deploy.

Despite private sector advancements that are impressive and accelerating, especially during the pandemic, emerging *capabilities* are driven by commercial *incentives* that don't align to societal needs. The Supply CHAIN Act takes major steps forward to address this disconnect so that we can provide goods and services in a timely and cost-effective manner before, during, and after major risks materialize.

I am the founder of Assemble, an innovation engine that exists to reinvent public-private partnerships. In our model, Federal agencies, State, County, and Municipal entities, and private-sector critical infrastructure providers will collaborate with the world's best innovators in government, academia, and the private sector.

Together, they will design, develop, test, and deploy technology solutions to address risks posed by weather events, public health outbreaks, terrorism, and cyber vulnerabilities. Our initial areas of technical focus are supply chain, weather forecasting, food-supply security, security operations, and advanced communications capabilities.

I have worked in this realm for 20 years, starting when I was a member of Secretary Mineta's staff at the U.S. Department of Transportation, and was called upon to help set up the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) after 9/11, and later as an Assistant Administrator of the agency at the Department of Homeland Security.

Our work to build TSA was critically dependent upon support from other Federal agencies and the private sector; those efforts, including missed warnings and other



mistakes made before, during, and after 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, Superstorm Sandy, the pandemic, and January 6, all contribute to the foundation for and mission of Assemble.

We look forward to ongoing collaboration with you and other Members of your Committee, along with the Executive Branch, and with State, County, and Municipal officials. I offer here for consideration additional detail on how key provisions of the Supply CHAIN Act can be activated.

We support the Act's creation of a new Under Secretary of Commerce, heading the Office of Supply Chain Resiliency and Crisis Response, to "promote resilient supply chains, including development and design, manufacturing, warehousing, transportation, distribution, and performance monitoring, adjustment, and continuous improvement."

This charge can be most effectively carried out if the Under Secretary engages with independent entities, including at newly established centers at key supply-chain locations throughout the Nation, to measure, report, update, and publish key supply chain indicators in the following areas:

- Resiliency, including susceptibility to interruption based on shocks to input supply, weather, sabotage, etc.
- Manufacturing capacity, specifically existing reach vs. likely potential need. Will include current domestic and offshore capacity, as well as surge capability.
- Financial capacity for production, stated as shortfalls or subsidies required to meet event-based demand with existing or new facilities. Will include current needs as well as stockpile requirements.
- Financial capacity for distribution, to measure the investment and/or subsidies required to support existing or new warehouses, workforce, transportation, logistics, etc.

Another important provision in this legislation directs the Under Secretary to "enter into agreements with Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) for the purposes of determining which technology solutions may be suitable for commercialization and distribution; and determining how private sector, and State and Local and Tribal agencies may engage with FFRDCs and Federal agencies to improve supply chain resilience and performance." This directive strengthening engagement with FFRDCs is essential and in fact is a core aspect of Assemble's approach to our work.



To meet the goals of this legislation, the Under Secretary should work with independent entities to recruit and manage private sector entities (including not-for-profit organizations) in risk-focused engagements with FFRDCs and Federal and state and municipal agencies. These engagements should:

- Bring leveraged resources to deliver more robust and timely developments across related projects.
- Provide a platform to drive additional intellectual-property (IP) creation and solution deployments.
- Provide a foundation for industrial-grade product-lifecycle management (PLM) processes.
- Refine public and private sector mission and technology requirements so that they are more compelling to innovators and investors, and easier to find and respond to.
- Provide private sector seed funding to FFRDCs.
- Attract new players to fulfill these requirements, with a particular focus on “dual-use” technologies.
- Recruit, organize, and mobilize government officials, corporate executives, and investors who can help innovators accelerate time to value.
- Mentor innovators through solution design, development, testing, and deployment to reduce friction.
- Increase likelihood and reduce time-to-value of commercial opportunities and monetization.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our views to you and the Committee and look forward to supporting you as you work towards enactment, and to engaging in the execution of this critical legislation.

If I may be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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