Talking Points on USICA/COMPETES Conference
Supplemental Funding Request

Background:

Congress is currently in conference negotiations on competitiveness legislation that would authorize new research, education and workforce development programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Energy Office of Science (DOE SC), the National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST) and other federal agencies. To succeed, however, these newly authorized programs must be funded adequately. We urge Congress to add $10 billion in supplemental funding over 5 years to help launch the exciting new programs proposed in both USICA and the COMPETES Act of 2022.

Talking points:

- While there is broad bipartisan support in principle for the missions of NSF, DOE SC, and NIST, Congress has repeatedly struggled to provide appropriate support for these agencies through the regular appropriations process.
- Both the House and Senate bills already contain $52 billion in supplemental funding for domestic semiconductor industry investments to restore U.S. global leadership in this vital sector. We strongly support this important investment in U.S. manufacturing capabilities.
- But the bills currently provide no funding for the other new programs authorized at NSF, DOE SC, or NIST in equally important areas of research, such as quantum information science, artificial intelligence, robotics, cybersecurity, biotechnology, and advanced communications technologies.
- To fulfill the vision of the USICA and the COMPETES Act, Congress must do more now. We request adding $10 billion over 5 years in supplemental appropriations to the final USICA/COMPETES Conference Agreement.
- These investments are critical for U.S. economic and national security. Without funding to implement the authorization bill, the U.S. will not come close to matching the efforts of China or other rivals in these important technology areas.
- Congress has been here before, passing legislation in 2007 and 2010 to authorize significant funding increases for NSF, DOE SC, and NIST. But as shown in a recent analysis by AAAS, Congress has repeatedly fallen far short of their intended targets.
- The United States cannot continue to under-invest in these important federal agencies. The latest National Science Board Science and Engineering Indicators report shows China’s annual increase of R&D spending has averaged 10.6 percent over the last decade, while the United States’ annual average increase was only 5.4 percent over the same period.
- We urge Congress to add $10 billion in supplementary appropriations funding to the final USICA/COMPETES agreement to help deliver on promise of this important legislation and strengthen U.S. scientific and technological leadership.