



INNOVATION: AN AMERICAN IMPERATIVE

2016 PROGRESS REPORT: On June 23, 2015, the heads of nine large U.S. corporations issued a call to action urging Congress to enact policies and make investments to ensure that the United States remains the global innovation leader. Responding to this call, members of Congress have already taken several bipartisan steps to bolster American innovation. To learn more, visit www.innovationimperative.us.



Renew the federal commitment to scientific discovery

Status: IN PROGRESS. The FY16 federal budget included a 6% increase for the National Institutes of Health, which begins to reverse more than a decade of decline in federal research investment and represents a step forward for America to regain its global innovation leadership. Congress has not yet provided similar increases for basic research at other agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy's Office of Science, the Department of Defense, NASA, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, USDA, and NOAA, although additional increases are currently under consideration for FY17 for biomedical and energy research.



Make permanent a strengthened federal R&D tax credit

Status: ENACTED. The Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 made the R&D tax credit permanent and extended its benefits to start-ups and small businesses.



Improve achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)

Status: IN PROGRESS. Congress has passed legislation to expand STEM teacher recruitment and training programs and to strengthen standards and accountability in K-12 education. Yet the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology has stated that funding for such programs continues to lag far behind what is needed to truly make a difference in student achievement. Meanwhile, U.S. students have slipped to 27th in math and 20th in science among the 34 OECD nations.



Reform U.S. visa policy

Status: AWAITING ACTION. America must reshape its policies to attract and retain the best and brightest researchers in an increasingly competitive global market (for example, by increasing the number of green cards to allow high-skilled talent from U.S. universities to remain in the U.S.). More than half of the graduates in STEM fields at American universities are foreign nationals. In the field of computer science alone, the U.S. graduates just 50,000 new students each year in the face of 550,000 open positions in the information technology industry. Until this gap can be filled through increased STEM education and training efforts for American students, American companies need additional green cards to access the top talent graduating from our universities.



Take steps to streamline or eliminate costly and inefficient regulations

Status: IN PROGRESS. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions has promoted a number of recommendations offered by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine in their 2015 report *Optimizing the Nation's Investment in Academic Research: A New Regulatory Framework for the 21st Century*. Meanwhile, a bipartisan working group of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation has identified this issue as a top priority for Congress and is exploring possible legislative solutions.



Reaffirm merit-based peer review

Status: IN PROGRESS. The American system of independent, merit-based peer review is the global gold standard for ensuring scientific excellence and integrity as well as the most effective use of taxpayer dollars. This standard is increasingly being adopted by competitor nations. The House and Senate FY17 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bills both include language supportive of the peer-review process, but these statements contrast with legislation passed by the House that would limit the independence of merit-based peer review.



Stimulate further improvements in advanced manufacturing

Status: IN PROGRESS. Congress and the Administration have worked together to establish a National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI). While 14 Manufacturing Innovation Institutes have been established or are being planned to meet critical research needs for advanced manufacturing, Congress has not provided enough funding to ensure that additional manufacturing institutes can be created. Additionally, legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate to designate 25 institutions of higher education as U.S. manufacturing universities. The Senate has passed a version of this legislation, but the House has not.