

June 25, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
US House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jefferies
Minority Leader
US House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jefferies:

The below company, academic and non-profit organizations write to you today to praise the House Science, Space and Technology Committee passage of the Expanding Partnerships for Innovation and Competitiveness Act (HR 8673) to establish a Foundation for Standards and Metrology within the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST), providing a pathway to a more resilient future for the institute.

NIST works with our nation's businesses and universities to drive American economic growth and job creation. Companies, academic institutions, and other federal agencies rely on STRS programs to provide foundational research and material development for their products and programs. NIST supports America's global competitiveness by aiding businesses to overcome technical obstacles – fulfilling a vital function that companies cannot do themselves. NIST's core measurement science programs, for example, provide calibrations and standards for industry broadly—from oil and gas to aerospace and medicine.

The agency also plays an essential role in emerging industries, such as quantum technology and artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity and digital identity that require foundational measurements to enable U.S. dominance. The National Quantum Initiative Act, which passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in 2018, includes NIST as one of three key agencies that will help ensure the U.S. remains a global leader in quantum.

NIST plays an especially instrumental role in the field of AI. This is exemplified in the recent Executive Order 14110 on Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence, which aims to build U.S. capacity to evaluate and mitigate the risks of AI systems and promoting an innovative, competitive AI ecosystem. The EO mandates NIST to develop meaningful evaluation guidelines, testing environments, and information resources to help organizations develop, deploy, and use AI technologies that are safe and secure, and that enhance AI trustworthiness. It is therefore more urgent than ever that NIST receives proper funding to fulfill its growing responsibilities.

Lastly, modern, functional facilities are required for NIST to remain the world-leader in measurement science. NIST currently has a backlog of over \$1 billion in deferred maintenance at their 50+ year-old laboratories in Maryland and Colorado. Recurring failures of these utility systems in recent years have resulted in lost work and costly damage. A study by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine recommends more than tripling the agency's current construction and maintenance budget annually for at least 12 years.

Unfortunately, annual funding for NIST has not kept up with their needs or the growing demands being placed on this institution. Establishing a Foundation for Standards and Metrology will not only provide a new mechanism for funding but will also foster the advancement of science and technology. By investing in the National Institute of Standards and Technology, we invest in the very foundation of our nation's ingenuity, ensuring that we continue to lead the world in research, standards, and groundbreaking discoveries.

We are grateful to Representative Haley Stevens and Representative Jay Obernolte for their leadership on this very important issue and request swift consideration and passage through the full House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

3D Epitaxial Technologies	Nokia of America Corporation	The University of Texas at Dallas
American Chemical Society	Northwest Engineering Solutions	Thorlabs Inc.
American Physical Society	Phillip Singerman, a former NIST Associate Director for Innovation and Industry Services (2011-2020)	TOPTICA Photonics
Association of Public Land Grant Universities	Quantinuum	University of Colorado, Boulder
Bluefors Cryocooler Technologies Inc	Rigetti Computing, Inc.	University of Maryland, College Park
Colorado Photonics Industry Association	Safe Quantum Inc.	Willie May, a former U/S of Commerce for Standards and Technology and Director of NIST
Florida Photonics Cluster	SEEQC	Zyvex Labs LLC
George Mason University	Southern University and A&M College	
Great Lakes Crystal Technologies, Inc.	SPIE	
HKA Marcom	StratConGlobal	
INA Solutions Inc	Swain Techs	
Infiltron Software Suite	Taskforce for American Innovation	
Infinera Corporation	Terranet Ventures	
Infleqtion	The Laser Institute of America	
Keysight Technologies		
M-7 Technologies		
Materials Research Society		