

INNOVATION: AN AMERICAN IMPERATIVE

A call to action by American industry, higher education, science, and engineering leaders urging Congress to enact policies and make investments that ensure the United States remains the global innovation leader.

Our nation knows what it takes to innovate: a sustained commitment to scientific research, a world-class workforce, and an economic climate that rewards entrepreneurship and innovation. As the most dynamic and prosperous nation in the world, the United States has long benefitted from policies and investments that have promoted innovation and in turn driven productivity and economic growth, bolstered American trade, ensured our health and national security, and safeguarded the American dream. Our leadership is now at risk because of years of under-prioritizing federal scientific research investments and policies that promote innovation.

Now is not the time to rest on past success. As noted by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in its 2014 Report *Restoring the Foundation: The Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream*, "There is a deficit between what America is investing and what it should be investing to remain competitive, not only in research but in innovation and job creation." Competitor nations are challenging our leadership by copying our playbook for success. At the same time our nation's support for scientific research and innovation is stagnating. If these trends continue, other countries will soon surpass the United States as the global innovation leader.

We must heed the warnings in the *Restoring the Foundation* report and other salient reports of the past decade and act decisively. In particular, Congress must:

Renew the federal commitment to scientific discovery

by ending sequestration's deep cuts to discretionary spending caps and providing steady and sustained real growth in funding of at least four percent for basic scientific research at: the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Energy's Office of Science, the Department of Defense, NASA, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, USDA, and NOAA;

Make permanent a strengthened federal R&D tax credit

as a part of comprehensive tax reform to encourage more private-sector innovation investment here in America instead of in competitor countries;

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

through increased funding of proven programs and incentives for science and math teacher recruitment and professional development;

Reform U.S. visa policy

to welcome and keep highly educated international professionals, particularly those holding STEM degrees from U.S. universities;

Take steps to streamline or eliminate costly and inefficient regulations

and practices governing federally funded research to help unburden researchers to focus more time on conducting research and training the next generation of scientists, engineers, health care professionals, and business leaders;

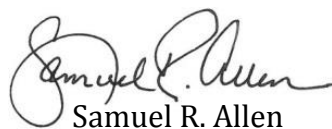
Reaffirm merit-based peer review

as the primary mechanism major federal agencies should employ in making competitive scientific research grants to ensure the most effective use of taxpayer dollars; and

Stimulate further improvements in advanced manufacturing

through support for programs aimed at accelerating manufacturing innovation and new federal-industry-academic partnerships.

We, the signatories, urge support for these actions to keep the United States the global innovation leader. We stand ready to do our part.



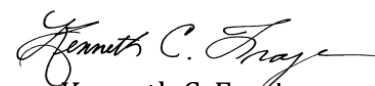
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