



13 February 2008

The Honorable Bart Gordon
Chairman, House Science & Technology Committee
2310 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers-United States of America (IEEE-USA), I would like to commend you and the House Science and Technology Committee for holding a hearing on funding for the America COMPETES Act in the FY2009 Administration Budget Request.

IEEE-USA was an ardent supporter of the America COMPETES Act as it was going through the legislative process because of its increased funding for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy's Office of Science, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, as well as improvements to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and research. We strongly feel that, if fully funded, the America COMPETES Act has the potential to play a critical role in our nation's economic and technological future.

However, like many in the STEM community, we were extremely disappointed by the lack of funding for the America COMPETES Act in the Fiscal Year 2008 appropriations. At a time when America's technological leadership is being challenged from nearly all corners of the globe, we believe it is especially important that the United States recommit its resources to continue developing the knowledge and research base that undergirds our country's economic health and well-being. Support for science and technology R&D is a bipartisan initiative that offers Congress and the Administration an opportunity to establish common ground.

We are encouraged that the 2009 Budget Request has full funding for the President's American Competitiveness Initiative program, but we would like to see Congress and the Administration work together this year to enact full funding for the America COMPETES Act and all of its authorized programs. We thank you again for shining a light on this vitally important issue, and we eagerly await the testimony of Office of Science and Technology Policy Director, Dr. John Marburger.

IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of more than 215,000 engineers, scientists and allied professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. IEEE-USA is part of the IEEE, the world's largest technical professional society with 370,000 members in 160 countries. See <http://www.ieeeusa.org>. For more information, please contact Bill Williams at (202) 530-8331, or at bill.williams@ieee.org.

Sincerely,

Russell J. Lefevre
President, IEEE-USA

[Sent to all Members of the House Science and Technology Committee via fax.]

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