



25 April 2008

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Byrd and Ranking Member Cochran:

I am writing on behalf of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers - United States of America (IEEE-USA) in support of the Technology Innovation Program (TIP) at the National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST). TIP was created by the America COMPETES Act of 2007 with an authorization of \$131 million in FY2009. We request that TIP be funded at the authorized level.

We believe that TIP is a worthy replacement for the Advanced Technology Program (ATP) that responds to all of the most important criticisms of the former program. TIP will have a more precise focus on the "high-risk, high-reward research" that too often cannot be funded by the private sector alone, and a completely new directive to address areas of critical national need. Private sector funding will be limited to small and medium sized companies, where a large portion of the American innovation occurs. New intellectual property rules will foster collaboration and technology transfer among companies, universities, and government agencies. At the same time, TIP will continue the best policies of ATP. It will rely on cost sharing, peer review and competition to ensure that only deserving proposals are funded, and thus will remain a model for collaboration between the federal government and the private sector in funding advanced technologies.

The value of TIP can be predicted by the results of ATP. Over its 16 year history, ATP awarded 768 projects. Four out of five ATP projects introduced new products or processes into the marketplace and half of all ATP projects resulted in patent applications with over 1400 patents awarded to date. According to the ATP Economic Assessment Office, "The benefit-cost case studies provide evidence that the benefits of the program far exceed its costs. These studies collectively attributed to ATP more than \$18 billion in expected present value social benefits from about 40 projects, much greater than the total amount spent by the program of \$2.3 billion to date, a greater than 8 to 1 return on investment." This is exactly the type of payoff Americans expect for their tax dollars. We therefore strongly object to the absence of a funding request for TIP in the President's proposed FY2009 budget. We further note that TIP received only \$65 million in the FY2008 appropriations bill (\$100 million was authorized), and that most of this funding must be used for the continuation of ATP grants. It is thus especially important that TIP be well funded in FY2009.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. IEEE-USA is an organizational unit of the IEEE. It was created in 1973 to advance the public good and promote the careers and public policy interests of the more than 215,000 electrical, electronics, computer and software engineers who are U.S. members of the IEEE. The IEEE is the world's largest technical professional society. If you have any questions or we can be of further assistance, please contact Bill Williams, legislative representative for our Research and Development Policy Committee, at (202) 530-8331 or at [bill.williams@ieee.org](mailto:bill.williams@ieee.org).

Sincerely,

Russell J. Lefevre  
President, IEEE-USA

**(LETTER SENT TO HOUSE AND SENATE APPROPRIATIONS LEADERS)**