

“Taken from 2003 House Conference Report 108-10  
FY 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Bill Conference Report...”

## NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY

The conference agreement includes \$712,134,000 for the appropriations accounts under the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for fiscal year 2003.

A description of each account and the Committee recommendation follows:

## SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES

The conference agreement includes \$359,411,000 for the Scientific and Technical Research and Services (core programs) appropriation of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

The following is a breakdown of the amounts provided under this account by activity.

	FY03 Recommended
Electronics & Electrical	45,731
Manufacturing Engineering	21,128
Chemical	40,313
Physics	35,500
Building and Fire Research	21,542
Materials Science & Engineering	56,532
Computer Applied Mathematics	53,078
Technology Assistance	17,679
Baldrige Quality Awards	5,205
Research Support	62,703
Total, STRS	\$359,411

Under the Building and Fire Research heading, the recommendation includes \$2,500,000 for a wind research project, \$3,000,000 for research efforts related to the World Trade Center collapse investigation.

Under the Computer and Applied Math heading, the recommendation includes \$1,000,000 for expert review teams, \$2,100,000 for wireless technologies and computer security checklists and guidelines, and \$500,000 in support of voting machine standards.

Under the Chemical Science and Technology Program heading, the recommendation includes \$1,000,000 to restore reductions in environmental measurements at the Hollings Marine Laboratory.

Under the Electronics and Engineering heading, \$3,000,000 is for salaries associated with the Office of Law Enforcement Standards to ensure that NIST has the critical personnel with the expertise to implement law enforcement standards initiatives proposed by their partner federal agencies.

In addition, under the Research Support heading, the recommendation includes \$2,400,000 for a telework project, \$6,500,000 for a certain critical infrastructure program, and includes \$15,000,000 for the Advanced Measurement Laboratory in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

Further, the conferees have heard reports that U.S. companies may not be as competitive as non-U.S. companies in emerging markets because U.S. standards are not incorporated in many international agreements. The conferees request NIST with input from the ITA, to provide to the Committees on Appropriations, no later than April 11, 2003, a plan detailing efforts that ensure U.S. business interests are represented in new international standard negotiations.

Competitive sourcing. The conferees understand that there are efforts within the Department of Commerce and other Departments, to use the implementation of the President's Management Initiative for Competitive Outsourcing (the A-76 process) as a way to reduce staff by more than 50 percent. This initiative is designed to compete or directly convert 15 percent of those positions identified as commercially competitive. However, the conferees understand that efforts are underway to identify roughly 75 percent of NIST's positions as commercial for purposes of this initiative. While the conferees certainly agree that there are certain advantages to competitive outsourcing, there is a concern that blind implementation could severely inhibit the operations of the Institute in the future. The conferees direct NIST to provide a detailed plan to the Committees on Appropriations prior to any changes in support of 'competitive outsourcing'.

For more than a century, the scientists, engineers, and supporting organizations of the Institute have established standards that affect nearly every aspect of life and work in America, from the doses of radiation in medical X-rays to the level of protection in bullet-proof vests used by police officers. NIST's mission plays an ever more critical role today by supporting our homeland security efforts through the development of standards for mail irradiation, guidelines for cyber security for Federal IT systems, and by conducting the Federal investigation of the collapse of the World Trade Center buildings.

The recommendation does not include a requested increase to the allowable amount to be transferred to the working capital fund.

## INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

The conference agreement includes \$286,623,000 for the Industrial Technology Services appropriation of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program--Recent economic downturns have had a devastating effect on the manufacturing sector. Therefore, to ameliorate some of the effect on this sector, the conferees have included \$106,623,000 for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program to fund all existing centers.

Advanced Technology Program--The conference agreement includes \$180,000,000 for the program, of which \$60,700,000 is for new awards. This amount, when combined with approximately \$34,000,000 in prior year funds, provides ATP awards at the fiscal year 2002 level. Within the amounts made available, \$45,000,000 shall be used for administrative costs, internal laboratory support, and for Small Business Innovation Research Program requirements.

## CONSTRUCTION OF RESEARCH FACILITIES

The conference agreement includes \$66,100,000 for construction, renovation, and maintenance of NIST facilities. Of the amounts provided, \$11,090,000 is for urgently needed construction and renovation projects at

the Boulder, Colorado laboratory, including a new primary electrical service and the first phase of the central utility plant, these investments should help minimize the number of brownouts affecting the campus; \$4,000,000 is to offset fit-up costs related to the Advanced Measurement Laboratory in Gaithersburg, Maryland, to be completed by December 2003; and \$22,194,000 for the backlog of safety, capacity, maintenance, and major repair projects account for the two NIST campuses.

The conferees direct NIST to report to the Committees on Appropriations on the progress of these construction projects on a quarterly basis.

Up to \$282,000 is available to transfer to the working capital fund, as proposed.

This account supports all NIST activities by providing the state of the art facilities necessary to carry out the NIST mission.