

Taken from House Report 108-792 FY 2005 Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations bill Conference Report...

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY

The conference agreement includes \$708,692,000 for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for fiscal year 2005, instead of \$524,970,000 as proposed by the House, and \$784,963,000 as proposed by the Senate.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES

The conference agreement includes \$383,892,000 for the Scientific and Technical Research and Services (core programs) of the NIST, as proposed by the Senate, instead of \$375,838,000 as proposed by the House. Of the funds made available, \$2,900,000 is provided for transfer to the NIST Working Capital Fund.

[In thousands of dollars]	
	Committee recommendation
Electronics and Electrical Engineering	\$49,590
Manufacturing Engineering	23,779
Chemical Science and Technology	43,951
Physics	41,796
Materials Science and Engineering	60,897
Building and Fire Research	21,779
Computer Science and Applied Mathematics	63,820
Technology Assistance	15,592
National Quality Program	5,465
Research Support Activities	57,223
Total, STRS	383,892

Within the funds made available for Electronics and Electrical Engineering, \$4,000,000 is provided for the Office of Law Enforcement Standards (OLEs) to fund the highest priority homeland security research projects. Projects managed by OLES are to be coordinated with the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security. In addition, \$1,000,000 is for a nanoelectronics initiative to support the development of semiconductor technologies.

Within the funds made available for Manufacturing Engineering, \$2,000,000 is for the nanomanufacturing initiative enabling critical infrastructural measurements and standards for the developing nanotechnology industry.

Within the funds made available for Physics, \$3,000,000 is for quantum computing. The conference agreement adopts language, as proposed by the Senate, regarding support of NIST's Nobel Laureates' efforts.

Within the funds made available for Materials Science and Engineering, \$6,000,000 is provided for upgrades to the National Center for Neutron Research in order to meet the increasing demand for this national scientific resource.

Within the funds made available for Building and Fire Research, \$2,000,000 is for measurements and standards for advanced fire fighting technologies. Numerous innovative technologies are becoming available for the Nation's fire departments. Unfortunately, there are few standard test methods able to assess the performance of these instruments.

Within the funds made available for Computer Science and Applied Mathematics, \$500,000 is for NIST's efforts in support of the Technical Guidelines Development Committee, as established under the Help America Vote Act, Public Law 107-252. Additionally, the conferees recognize the need to continue support of the US-VISIT program and other biometric programs of the Departments of State and Justice and have provided \$2,000,000 to allow for NIST to begin testing the accuracy of multimodal systems, develop guidelines for testing fingerprint segmentation methods, and determining the influence of multiple images on the accuracy of facial biometrics.

The Nation's critical infrastructure continues to be at risk due to inadequate security, which is subject to exploitation, including the critical systems of the Federal Government. The Congress has designated the Computer Security Division as having the authority and responsibility of developing Federal standards, security guidelines, security checklists and associated methods and techniques for securing information systems, specifically Federal non-classified systems. These responsibilities are derived from the Federal Information Security Management Act and the Cyber Security Research and Development Act. The conference agreement includes \$10,000,000 to develop the standards, guidelines, security specifications, testing methods, checklists, and testing and scanning tools necessary to protect the Nation's cyberspace.

Within the funding for Research Support, an increase of \$3,000,000 is provided to the Competence program and \$10,050,000 is provided for Business Systems. The recommendation continues funding of \$2,400,000 for a telework project and \$6,500,000 for a critical infrastructure program, both of which received similar funding in fiscal year 2004.

Chemical Science and Technology Study- The conferees understand that the current methods of bulk asbestos analysis were designed to segregate commercial asbestos products containing more than 1 percent asbestos and may be inadequate for determining low concentrations of asbestos that occur in the natural environment. The conferees are aware of private-sector interest in developing a mass-based method that is accurate to the 0.1-1 WT percent levels and which will segregate asbestos from non-asbestos particles on

mine-grade samples of amphiboles and a method for distinguishing asbestos and non-asbestos particles in airborne filter samples. The conferees direct NIST to provide to the Committees on Appropriations in both the House and Senate, not later than January 31, 2005, a determination on whether developing such a methodology is necessary and, if so, the process, cost, and timetable for developing this methodology.

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

The conference agreement includes \$251,300,000 for the Industrial Technology Services appropriation of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, instead of \$106,000,000 as proposed by the House, and \$315,000,000 as proposed by the Senate.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership program (MEP)- The conference agreement includes \$109,000,000 to fully fund all MEP centers. The conference agreement includes bill language prohibiting the Secretary of Commerce from recompeting any existing Manufacturing Extension Partnership Center prior to 2007. Federal support for the MEP program, combined with State and private sector funding, has translated into more jobs, more tax revenue, more exports, and a more secure supply source of consumer and defense goods. The MEP program is an economical and prudent means of assisting small manufacturers that want to remain in the United States, continue to hire American workers, and stay competitive in the global market place. Of the amounts provided, \$3,000,000 is to ensure small and rural States receive necessary manufacturing assistance and services. The conferees have reviewed the Department of Commerce's report entitled, 'Manufacturing in America' and its recommendations. The conferees do not support the report's recommendation to reorganize the MEP program around a regional approach. The conferees recognize that the original concept of 12 regional centers for MEP is not the best model to address the needs of small and medium-sized manufacturers. The conferees support MEP's expansion in order to equalize services to all types of manufacturers across the country. The conferees direct the Secretary of Commerce to provide the necessary coverage for small and medium-sized manufacturers. In addition, the conferees are concerned about the ability of small and rural States to provide adequate 'matching' funds. The conferees direct MEP to develop a program, which will provide additional assistance to small and rural States and report back to the Committees on Appropriations by April 15, 2005, with an implementation plan.

The conference agreement includes a new provision naming the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Centers the Hollings Centers.

The conference agreement adopts, by reference, language in the House report regarding the requirements for applicants seeking assistance.

Advanced Technology Program- The conference agreement provides an appropriation of \$142,300,000 for the Advanced Technology Program (ATP), instead of \$203,000,000 as proposed by the Senate and no funding as proposed by the House. The conference agreement does not adopt bill language providing specific funding for new awards as proposed by the Senate.

CONSTRUCTION OF RESEARCH FACILITIES

The conference agreement includes \$73,500,000 for the construction and major renovations of the NIST campuses at Boulder, Colorado, and Gaithersburg, Maryland.

The conferees provide \$23,000,000 for safety, capacity, maintenance, and major repairs, and \$7,000,000 for the central utility plant upgrades for the Boulder, Colorado, facility.