

and provides Federal registration to owners of qualified trademarks.

Patent Fee Collections.—The Committee is concerned that patent fee collections have fallen significantly below projected amounts in recent years, while spending at USPTO continues to increase. The Committee appreciates that USPTO has fee reserve and operating reserve accounts to accommodate increased spending in fiscal year 2016, and additionally appreciates that low collections may stem from efficiencies gained by reducing application appeals or from external factors beyond the agency’s control. However, the Committee remains concerned that the agency has not articulated a long-term plan for significantly reducing its costs and expenditures if patent fee collections remain low. Therefore, USPTO is directed to include such a plan in its fiscal year 2017 budget request.

Budget Execution.—The Committee continues to allow USPTO full access to patent and trademark fees and provides language allowing USPTO to retain any revenue in excess of appropriated levels.

Transfer to Office of Inspector General.—The Committee provides \$2,000,000 for the Office of Inspector General [OIG] to continue oversight and audits of USPTO operations and budget transparency, and USPTO is directed to work with the Department of Commerce to implement all OIG recommendations.

Reprogramming and Spend Plan.—USPTO shall follow the reprogramming procedures outlined in section 505 of this act before using excess fee collections to forward fund expenses beyond fiscal year 2016. Any deviations from the funding distribution provided for, including carryover balances, are subject to the standard reprogramming procedures set forth in section 505 of this act. USPTO is directed to provide, as part of the spending plan required in section 534 of this act, all carryover balances from previous fiscal years, and a description of any changes to the patent or trademark fee structure. Any changes from the spending plan shall also be subject to section 505 of this act. USPTO is directed to submit all reprogramming requests, spending plans, and budget justifications to the Committee through the Department of Commerce.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY

Appropriations, 2015	\$863,900,000
Budget estimate, 2016	1,119,661,000
House allowance	855,000,000
Committee recommendation	893,000,000

The Committee’s recommendation provides \$893,000,000 for the National Institute of Standards and Technology [NIST]. The recommendation is \$29,100,000 above the fiscal year 2015 enacted level and \$226,661,000 below the budget request. Up to \$9,000,000 may be transferred from the Scientific and Technical Research and Services account to the Working Capital Fund.

NIST’s mission is to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve our quality of life.

A description of each NIST account and the corresponding Committee recommendation follows in the subsequent three headings.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES

Appropriations, 2015	\$675,500,000
Budget estimate, 2016	754,661,000
House allowance	675,000,000
Committee recommendation	684,700,000

The Committee's recommendation provides \$684,700,000 for NIST research and services. The recommendation is \$9,200,000 above the fiscal year 2015 enacted level and \$69,961,000 below the budget request. The Committee requests a detailed spending plan for NIST's highest priority laboratory programs describing resources used for each program, project, or activity.

Cybersecurity.—The Committee supports the administration's request for cybersecurity activities within NIST, which includes: \$15,000,000 for the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence [NCCoE]; \$16,500,000 for the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace [NSTIC], including further pilots; and \$4,400,000 for the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education in order to address the need for a well-trained cybersecurity workforce. In addition, the Committee provides no less than \$72,700,000 for cybersecurity research and development, an increase of \$7,000,000 above the fiscal year 2015 level for cryptographic standards.

National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence.—The Committee is encouraged by the work conducted to date by the NCCoE and the growing partnerships it is developing with private industry. The NCCoE is quickly becoming a premiere partnership through which the Federal Government, industry, and academia collaborate to solve daunting cybersecurity challenges. The Committee recommends that NIST continue to work in concert with its public, State, and county partners to encourage co-location of companies involved in NCCoE activities, which will encourage further innovation by leveraging the development of new applications, business use cases, and technology transfer among all stakeholders.

In addition, the Committee directs NIST to integrate the NSTIC program into the umbrella of the NCCoE. The Committee feels strongly that housing NSTIC under the NCCoE will allow NIST to leverage existing programmatic assets, ensuring that each program's objectives are accomplished.

Retail Sector Cybersecurity.—The Committee commends the NCCoE's move to create a specific initiative on cybersecurity tools to protect the retail sector and its customers. The Nation's retail sector is increasingly vulnerable to and targeted by cyber attacks that seek both private customer data and valuable intellectual property. These intrusions threaten the growing e-commerce marketplace. Therefore, the Committee encourages the NCCoE to continue working to address this critical issue and expeditiously build use cases and tools in partnership with retailers and universities that have experience in this area.

Cybersecurity Research and Grants.—The Committee encourages DOC to fund multidisciplinary programs of study and research that focus on tackling cybersecurity issues on a global scale. When es-

establishing criteria for external grant funding, consideration should only be given to institutions of higher education, including community colleges, designated by the National Security Agency as Centers of Academic Excellence for Information Assurance Education and Centers for Academic Excellence for Information Assurance Research.

Centers of Excellence.—The Committee encourages NIST to propose funding to create an appropriate number of new centers of excellence in future fiscal years, including in such fields as regenerative medicine and advanced photonics.

Disaster Resilient Buildings.—The Committee provides the full requested amount for Disaster Resilient Buildings and Infrastructure, of which up to \$5,000,000 shall be distributed through competitive external awards to academic institutions to support the evaluation of potential technologies and architectural design criteria to aid the overall effort for science-based building codes to improve disaster resilience.

Sports Safety Standards.—The Committee encourages NIST to investigate the development of new and better standards for testing sports equipment that is supported through independent research, governance, and industrial independence. Testing should replicate on-field impacts to produce data for “worst-practical-impact” conditions that can be incorporated into better standards. Such standards will lead to research and development of new safety equipment and state-of-the-art gear that significantly reduce athletic injuries.

Urban Dome Program.—The Committee notes the value of NIST’s Urban Dome program and the importance of accurate measurement science for environmental monitoring and human health, as more than half the world’s population is living in urban areas, and this concentration is expected to intensify over the coming decades. The Committee has included an additional \$2,000,000 above the fiscal year 2015 amount for the Office of Special Programs to maintain and expand the number of urban dome locations in fiscal year 2016.

In fiscal year 2015, the Committee directed NIST to submit a plan within 60 days of enactment on the Urban Dome program, including: anticipated outcomes, inclusion of additional U.S. cities, ways the United States can enlist the support of international partners for comparable efforts in other countries, and any plan for transitioning research to operations. NIST is directed to submit this report as expeditiously as possible.

Management Fees.—The Committee is concerned by recent news reports suggesting that certain Federal grant and cooperative agreement recipients have used management fees inappropriately by spending federally awarded funds on, for example, lobbying, alcohol, and entertainment. NIST is directed to ensure that all funding recipients understand and are in compliance with Office of Management and Budget guidance on appropriate uses of such funds.

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Appropriations, 2015	\$138,100,000
Budget estimate, 2016	306,000,000
House allowance	130,000,000
Committee recommendation	145,000,000

The Committee's recommendation provides \$145,000,000 for Industrial Technology Services. The recommendation is \$6,900,000 above the fiscal year 2015 enacted level and \$161,000,000 below the budget request. Supporting the Nation's manufacturers, especially small businesses, is critical to keeping America innovative in a global marketplace. The Committee's recommendation provides \$130,000,000 for the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program and \$15,000,000 for the Advanced Manufacturing Consortia [AMTech].

Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program [MEP].—The Committee recommends \$130,000,000 for MEP. The Committee supports MEP's focus on strengthening the existing network of MEP centers and providing additional support to centers based on the documented performance of the center's activities and the manufacturing capacity of the area served by the center.

MEP Cost Share.—The Committee is aware of concerns regarding the MEP's current cost-share structure. This matter is currently being considered by the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Not later than 45 days after enactment of this act, NIST is directed to provide a report to the Committee and to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, detailing quantifiable metrics on total MEP center funding, including a breakdown of the type of contribution source across centers that have transitioned from the 50 percent Federal, 50 percent non-Federal cost-share to a lower cost-share held by the Federal Government.

Metals-Based Additive Manufacturing.—Within funding amounts provided for AMTech, the Committee provides up to \$5,000,000 for competitive external grants for academic institutions to support research, development, and workforce training to overcome barriers to high-volume additive manufacturing of metals. While the Committee is aware of recent breakthroughs in metals-based additive manufacturing, major technical barriers still exist to dramatically improving build rates that would enable commercial markets to benefit from high-volume, metals-based additive manufacturing.

In addition, NIST is encouraged to support partnerships and research opportunities with academic institutions in the advanced manufacturing of plastics and polymers and to explore ways to further reduce inefficiencies in the polymer manufacturing and extrusion process.

National Network for Manufacturing Innovation.—The Committee provides up to \$5,000,000 within AMTech to fund NIST's coordination role for existing NNMI institutes, as authorized by the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–235), including those led by the Department of Defense and Department of Energy. However, no funds are provided for the Department to establish any NIST-led NNMI institutes in fiscal year 2016.

CONSTRUCTION OF RESEARCH FACILITIES

Appropriations, 2015	\$50,300,000
Budget estimate, 2016	59,000,000
House allowance	50,000,000
Committee recommendation	63,300,000

The Committee's recommendation provides \$63,300,000 for construction of research facilities. The recommendation is \$13,000,000 above the fiscal year 2015 enacted level and \$4,300,000 above the budget request.

Building 245.—The Committee is disappointed that despite clear need and consistent urging from the Committee, no funding was requested to begin renovating Building 245, a 53-year-old radiation physics research laboratory that does not currently meet NIST's research needs or safety requirements. NIST shall spend no less than \$13,000,000 to begin design and renovation of Building 245 in fiscal year 2016. NIST shall use a design/build contract to ensure the fastest possible start to the project, and is also directed to request sufficient construction funds for Building 245 in the fiscal year 2017 budget request.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2015	\$5,440,973,000
Budget estimate, 2016	5,974,689,000
House allowance	5,169,261,000
Committee recommendation	5,381,567,000

The Committee's recommendation provides \$5,381,567,000 for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA]. The recommendation is \$59,406,000 below the fiscal year 2015 enacted level and \$593,122,000 below the budget request.

OPERATIONS, RESEARCH, AND FACILITIES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Appropriations, 2015	\$3,202,398,000
Budget estimate, 2016	3,413,360,000
House allowance	3,149,877,000
Committee recommendation	3,242,723,000

The Committee's recommendation provides \$3,242,723,000 for NOAA's operations, research, and facilities. The recommendation is \$40,325,000 above the fiscal year 2015 enacted level and \$170,637,000 below the budget request.

NOAA NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE

The Committee's recommendation provides \$497,370,000 for the National Ocean Service [NOS]. NOS programs provide scientific, technical, and management expertise to promote safe navigation; assess the health of coastal and marine resources; respond to natural and human-induced threats; and preserve coastal and ocean environments.

The Committee's recommendations are displayed in the following table: