

ciencies achieved in patent processing as a result of these information technology investments.

*Addressing management failures.*—During fiscal year 2014, serious management concerns came to light including two Inspector General reports: *Review of Waste and Mismanagement at the Patent Trial and Appeal Board (13–1077)* and *Review of Conduct by a High-Ranking USPTO Official in the Hiring of a Trademark Organization Employee (13–0726)*; and a PTO Internal Administrative Inquiry Report in response to Inspector General Referral No. 12–1196–H PTO regarding abuse of telework programs at PTO. During fiscal year 2016, the PTO shall continue to report quarterly to the Committee on the implementation of reforms to ensure that employee time and attendance is appropriately managed and that nepotism is not tolerated.

*Patent quality.*—Within 90 days of enactment of this Act, PTO shall report to the Committee, on its implementation of the recommendations included in the Inspector General report: *USPTO Needs to Strengthen Patent Quality Assurance Practices* and other steps being taken to improve the quality of patents.

#### NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY

The Committee recommends \$855,000,000 for NIST, which is \$8,900,000 below fiscal year 2015 and \$264,661,000 below the request.

*Security.*—The Committee is concerned about security-related issues at NIST, in particular potential inappropriate access of foreign nationals to NIST facilities and information systems. The Committee directs NIST to coordinate with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to improve and standardize security training and enforcement across the agency and to ensure that security, counterintelligence, and export control functions are fully staffed.

NIST shall provide to the Committee quarterly: an accounting of vacancy rates in security-related offices; a summary of all known security incidents occurring that quarter involving access violations by foreign nationals or the unauthorized transfer of proprietary or sensitive information; and a summary of any criminal or administrative sanctions applied that quarter due to violations of security-related laws or regulations.

#### SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES

##### (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

The Committee recommends \$675,000,000 for NIST's scientific and technical programs, which is \$500,000 below fiscal year 2015 and \$79,661,000 below the request. The amount for Scientific and Technical Research and Services includes the requested increases for the Materials Genome Initiative; Disaster Resilient Buildings and Infrastructure; Strengthening NIST Cryptographic and Privacy Capabilities; and Quantum-Based Sensors and Measurements.

*Laboratory programs.*—The recommendation includes \$603,500,000 for NIST Laboratory programs. Within this amount, up to \$6,500,000 is provided for the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC). The recommended amount only supports ongoing programmatic efforts and does not include the second year of funding for fiscal year 2015 grant awardees or funds

to award new grants in fiscal year 2016. NIST shall provide a report to the Committee within 120 days of enactment of this Act regarding the status of each of the pilots funded, and milestones achieved, the near-term plans for continuing this program, and proposed future efforts. NIST shall use the remaining \$10,000,000 proposed for NSTIC to enhance research and standards activities in its core lab programs as noted in the previous paragraph.

*Standards Coordination and Special Programs.*—The recommendation includes \$55,000,000 for standards coordination and special programs. Within these amounts, up to \$5,000,000 is included to maintain NIST's current forensic research and standards work. The recommendation does not include funds to support or operate Forensic Science Advisory Committees. The recommendation does not include the requested increase for Manufacturing Entrepreneurship.

*Lab-to-market.*—The recommendation does not provide funding for the lab-to-market program.

*Cybersecurity.*—The Committee is aware that the nation's retail sector is vulnerable to and targeted by cyberattacks. The Committee encourages NIST to build on its existing industry-sector focused work to create a retail-specific cybersecurity initiative and partner, as appropriate, with academic entities and national leaders in retail cybersecurity and retail supply chain management and logistics.

The Committee also encourages NIST, as it continues its cybersecurity-related measurement science efforts, to ensure sufficient attention is given to cybersecurity issues associated with implantable medical devices.

*Windstorm research and disaster resiliency.*—As part of its efforts to improve the resiliency of buildings, NIST's Engineering Division is encouraged to partner with academic research institutions that have expertise in the effects of natural disasters to replicate high-force windstorm impacts on buildings and test large, integrated models of such impacts.

*Textile research.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of the U.S. textile industry and encourages NIST to pursue advanced textile and apparel research and manufacturing activities. The Committee directs that the Department of Commerce, no later than 30 days after the enactment of this Act, provide a report detailing the Department's efforts to fund projects specifically related to advanced textile and apparel research and manufacturing activities since fiscal year 2014.

*Additive manufacturing.*—The Committee is aware of recent breakthroughs in metals-based additive manufacturing that have the potential to dramatically increase the ability to mass produce complex metallic parts. While important progress has been made, the Committee understands major technical barriers still exist to dramatically improving additive manufacturing. To that end, the Committee encourages NIST to examine research, development, and workforce training to overcome the barriers to high volume additive manufacturing of metals.

*Neuroscience.*—New discoveries resulting from increased Federal investment in neuroscience have the potential to lead to advancement in many areas including communication, education, medicine, and the economy. The Committee encourages NIST to work with

stakeholders to help expedite the commercialization of these new discoveries.

#### INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

The Committee recommends \$130,000,000 for Industrial Technology Services, which is \$8,100,000 below fiscal year 2015 and \$176,000,000 below the request. The entire amount recommended in this account is for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), which is the same as fiscal year 2015 and \$11,000,000 below the request.

*Program efficiencies.*—The Committee is aware of recent efforts by MEP to examine ways to reduce administrative costs and provide more direct assistance to the centers. Accordingly, MEP shall provide to the Committee an updated report within 60 days of enactment of this Act detailing the amount of funds to be maintained at headquarters and the uses of those funds. NIST shall also provide the Committee with updates on the status of recompetition of the centers.

*Network for Manufacturing Innovation.*—The recommendation includes section 110, which provides authority for NIST to use unobligated balances for the Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NMI). The Committee expects that the funds provided by section 110 will be used only for coordination of interagency activities in support of the institutes and only for activities authorized by the Revitalize American Manufacturing Act (RAMI). The Committee notes that RAMI provides the authority to seek the use of unobligated balances in the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account for manufacturing innovation institutes. The Committee notes NIST can pursue use of these funds as appropriate for establishment and operation of the institutes.

*Advanced manufacturing.*—The Committee expects the Department to follow the direction of the RAMI, in which open competition is to be used to select the technologies that the industry-driven manufacturing and innovation institutes will focus on. The Committee encourages the Department, in advancing manufacturing innovation across the country, to examine the possibility of establishing regional collaborative networks with advanced manufacturing communities that make full use of the Department's MEP program centers involved in advanced manufacturing to ensure the participation of small- and medium-sized manufacturers and encompasses the resources of the national laboratories in technology transfer and working directly with advanced manufacturing communities.

#### CONSTRUCTION OF RESEARCH FACILITIES

The Committee recommends \$50,000,000 for NIST construction, which is \$300,000 below fiscal year 2015 and \$9,000,000 below the request. NIST shall continue to provide updates on the projects funded within this account, to include milestones and total amount of funding necessary for completion.

#### NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

The Committee recommends a total of \$5,167,261,000 in discretionary funds for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-