



TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN INNOVATION

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INNOVATION TASK FORCE ON FY '08 OMNIBUS BILL: CONGRESS AND ADMINISTRATION SHORT-CHANGE COMPETITIVENESS

Following is a statement by the Task Force on the Future of American Innovation on the FY08 omnibus appropriations bill now under consideration in Congress.

The FY08 omnibus appropriations bill that Congress is considering represents a step backwards for the bipartisan innovation agenda. The President and Congress, for all their stated support this year for making basic research in the physical sciences and engineering a top budget priority ended up essentially cutting, or flat-funding, key science agencies after accounting for inflation.

The nations that seek to challenge our global leadership in science and innovation should be greatly encouraged by this legislation.

The President and a near-unanimous Congress, by enacting the America COMPETES Act earlier this year, laid out a bold path toward revitalizing basic research in the physical sciences and engineering. COMPETES was a welcome Congressional initiative to double funding for America's science research programs and expand science education that complemented the President's American Competitiveness Initiative and the Democratic Innovation Agenda.

This appropriations legislation takes a step back from the promises contained in all of these initiatives.

The Task Force on the Future of American Innovation is hopeful that this reversal of direction does not represent a lack of commitment to turning around the nation's long decline in support for basic research programs. For now, the failure to provide the funding required to begin growing these programs makes these promises little more than empty gestures. We intend to work with the Administration and Congress in the new year to make the promise of America COMPETES a reality.

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The [Task Force on the Future of American Innovation](http://www.futureofinnovation.org), a coalition of businesses and business organizations, scientific societies, and higher education associations, was founded in 2004 to advocate greater federal investments for basic research in the physical sciences and engineering. The group focuses on the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, the Department of Defense research budget, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology labs at the Department of Commerce.