



April 7, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Republican Leader McConnell, and Republican Leader McCarthy:

We write to encourage swift reconciliation of the differences between S. 1260, the United States Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) and H.R. 4521, the America COMPETES Act.

Whether it is in energy, technology, health care, or manufacturing, the United States has long been the global leader in ingenuity and innovation. However, our competitive advantages that serve as crucial underpinnings to domestic prosperity are being threatened. Many other countries have increased their domestic investments in research and development, workforce, and key industries such as semiconductors and renewable energy.

With the passage of a conferenced USICA and COMPETES, Congress has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to boost American competitiveness and prosperity. These proposals would create and revitalize critical programs in research and design, manufacturing, and supply chain security that together will help the United States maintain its position as the leading global economy.

As Congress works to reconcile the House and Senate bills, Bipartisan Policy Center Action recommends the following provisions be included in the final bill:

### Energy

- Create the Foundation for Energy Security and Innovation to mobilize private sector financing to invest in energy technologies (Sec. 2528 of USICA and Sec. 10751 of COMPETES);

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- Authorize at least \$17 billion for the Department of Energy to advance key technologies such as microelectronics, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing (Sec. 2117 of USICA and Sec. 10101-10116 of COMPETES);
- Authorize the Regional Clean Energy Innovation Program to invest in energy innovation ecosystems in diverse geographic regions (Sec. 10642 of COMPETES);
- Authorize Energizing Technology Transfer provisions to boost energy commercialization and technology transfer activities (Sec. 10621-10637 of COMPETES);
- Authorize the SUPER Act to develop tools, technologies, and methods for low-emission steel manufacturing (Sec. 10721 of COMPETES).

### Technology

- Provide \$52 billion to the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) for America Fund to incentivize domestic semiconductor production (Sec. 1002 of USICA; Sec. 10001 of COMPETES);
- Provide \$1.5 billion in supplemental appropriations for the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund (Sec. 1003 of USICA; Sec. 20101 of COMPETES);
- Establish a new Directorate of Technology and Innovation within the National Science Foundation (NSF) to facilitate research in 10 key technology areas (Division B of USICA);
- Authorize \$10 billion to support regional economic development and innovation hubs with more detailed considerations about geographic diversity of America's innovation centers (Sec. 2401 of USICA; Sec. 10641 of COMPETES);
- Direct the Office of Science and Technology Policy to establish a Research Security and Integrity Information Sharing Analysis Organization for purposes of gathering and analyzing critical cyber and related information (Sec. 2302 of USICA).

### Immigration

- Create a new start-up/entrepreneur visa and green card path (Secs. 80301 and 80302 of COMPETES);
- Develop a streamlined path from student visas to green card for advanced degree holders in STEM fields (Sec. 80303 of COMPETES);
- Require new Department of Homeland Security reports and metrics on the border, one for evaluating the effect of border technology on irregular migration and another assessing the management of ports of entry (Secs. 50105 and 50106 of COMPETES).

### Supply Chain

- Authorize \$45 billion for grants, loans, and loan guarantees to support supply chain resilience and manufacturing of critical goods, industrial equipment, and manufacturing technology (SEC. 20201 of COMPETES).

### Innovation

- Reauthorize, for five years, the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs (Amendment #135 to COMPETES). BPC Action has also endorsed improvements to these programs and encourages Congress to consider both reauthorization and improvement.

### Family Leave

- Require the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to develop guidance prohibiting discrimination in the awarding and administering of research grants due to a researcher taking family leave and to make grants more flexible to accommodate caregiving needs (Sec. 2215 of USICA and Sec. 2215 of COMPETES).

We commend Congress for addressing these critical issues and passing legislation to maintain American economic leadership and competitiveness. We urge quick resolution of the USICA/COMPETES bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Stockwell".

Michele Stockwell  
Executive Director, BPC Action