

STEM pipeline and the STEM workforce that will drive American innovation in order to meet the challenges of the 21st century economy.

I want to thank Leader MCCARTHY for introducing this legislation and for the opportunity to cosponsor this. I also thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON for their great work in ushering this bill through the committee on a bipartisan basis.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 5509 because it recognizes the great work under way in National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education Program. This program works to promote the development of our STEM technical workforce and ensures that it continues to be prioritized going forward.

As my colleagues are aware, I have two degrees in engineering. My wife also has a degree in math. This is part of the reason I am an ardent supporter of STEM education, especially education that is aligned with the requirements for in-demand careers.

One such program in my district is called the National Center for Systems Security and Information Assurance at Moraine Valley Community College. Since 2003, it has received Advanced Technological Education funding from NSF to be a national center of excellence in cybersecurity education. The college provides students with real-world learning experiences and provides curriculum, instructional materials, and professional development for cybersecurity educators around the world.

We all know that there is a massive nationwide need for cybersecurity professionals. According to the Department of Homeland Security's National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education, there are currently over 301,000 open jobs in cybersecurity, including over 13,000 in the public sector.

To make progress in meeting this need as well as the need in other STEM fields, we will need many more innovative education programs like the one at Moraine Valley and those promoted by H.R. 5509. This type of education benefits students, employers, our economy, and our national security, and it is worthy of this Chamber's support.

I thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON for their work on this bill. I thank Chairman SMITH for his bipartisan work on the three bills that we are doing here tonight, and I am hopeful that perhaps there will be more to do before the end of this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, just briefly, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for working with us so well on so many

bills for almost 2 years. I think he has been as active on the legislation as any other member of the committee, and as he pointed out or suggested, most of the bills that we passed under the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's jurisdiction are, in fact, bipartisan bills; and he has, as often as not, been an important player in the passage of those pieces of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there are no other requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5509, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6229) to authorize the programs of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6229

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Institute of Standards and Technology Reauthorization Act of 2018".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) FISCAL YEAR 2018.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Commerce \$1,198,500,000 for the National Institute of Standards and Technology for fiscal year 2018.

(2) SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS.—Of the amount authorized by paragraph (1)—

(A) \$724,500,000 shall be for scientific and technical research and services laboratory activities;

(B) \$319,000,000 shall be for the construction and maintenance of facilities; and

(C) \$155,000,000 shall be for industrial technology services activities.

(b) FISCAL YEAR 2019.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Commerce \$1,125,000,000 for the National Institute of Standards and Technology for fiscal year 2019.

(2) SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS.—Of the amount authorized by paragraph (1)—

(A) \$850,000,000 shall be for scientific and technical research and services laboratory activities, of which—

(i) \$109,900,000 shall be for the advanced communications, networks, and scientific data systems mission area;

(ii) \$103,200,000 shall be for the cybersecurity and privacy mission area;

(iii) \$234,000,000 shall be for the fundamental measurement, quantum science and measurement dissemination mission area; and

(iv) \$89,800,000 shall be for the physical infrastructure and resilience mission area;

(B) \$120,000,000 shall be for the construction and maintenance of facilities; and

(C) \$155,000,000 shall be for industrial technology services activities.

SEC. 3. QUANTUM INFORMATION SCIENCE.

(a) RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT.—The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall—

(1) continue to support and expand basic quantum information science and technology research and development of measurement and standards infrastructure necessary to advance commercial development of quantum applications;

(2) use the programs of the Institute, in collaboration with other relevant Federal agencies, as appropriate, to train scientists in quantum information science and technology to increase participation in the quantum fields;

(3) establish or expand collaborative ventures or consortia with other public or private sector entities, including other Federal agencies engaged in quantum information science research and development, institutions of higher education, National Laboratories, and industry, for the purpose of advancing the field of quantum information science and engineering; and

(4) have the authority to enter into and perform such contracts on such terms as the Secretary, acting through the Director, considers appropriate, including cooperative research and development arrangements and grants and cooperative agreements or other transactions, as may be necessary in the conduct of the work of the Institute with respect to quantum information science and technology.

(b) QUANTUM WORKSHOP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Director, shall convene a workshop of stakeholders to discuss the future measurement, standards, cybersecurity, and other issues that relate to development of quantum information science in the United States. The goals of the workshop shall be—

(A) assessment of the Institute's quantum information science and technology research work, including areas that may need additional Institute investment in order to support development of quantum information science and technology in the United States; and

(B) consideration of recommendations and priority issues for the Institute's participation in the proposed National Quantum Initiative Program.

(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Director, shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate a summary report containing the findings of the workshop convened under this subsection.

(c) FUNDING.—The Secretary of Commerce shall devote \$80,000,000 to carry out this section for fiscal year 2019, subject to the availability of appropriations, to come from amounts made available pursuant to section 2(b)(2)(A)(iii) of this Act. This section shall be carried out using funds otherwise appropriated by law after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH.

(a) RESEARCH.—The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall expand the fundamental and applied research carried out by the Institute to address key questions relating to the measurement of privacy, security,

and vulnerability of software tools and communications networks, including through—

(1) the development of research and engineering capabilities to provide practical solutions, including measurement techniques and engineering toolkits, to solve cybersecurity challenges such as human factors, identity management, network security, privacy, and software;

(2) investment in tools to help private and public sector organizations measure their cybersecurity, manage their risks and ensure workforce preparedness for new cybersecurity challenges; and

(3) investment in programs to prepare the United States with strong cybersecurity and encryption technologies to apply to emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, the internet of things, and quantum computing.

(b) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall have the authority to enter into and perform such contracts on such terms as the Secretary considers to be appropriate, including cooperative research and development arrangements, grants, and cooperative agreements or other transactions, as may be necessary in the conduct of the work of the Institute with respect to cybersecurity.

SEC. 5. COMPOSITES RESEARCH.

(a) **RESEARCH.**—The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall implement the recommendations contained in the December 2017 report entitled “Road Mapping Workshop Report on Overcoming Barriers to Adoption of Composites in Sustainable Infrastructure”, as appropriate, to help facilitate the adoption of composite technology in infrastructure in the United States. In implementing such recommendations, the Secretary, acting through the Director shall, with respect to the use of composite technology in infrastructure—

(1) not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, establish a design data clearinghouse to identify, gather, validate, and disseminate existing design criteria, tools, guidelines, and standards; and

(2) develop methods and resources required for testing an evaluation of safe and appropriate uses of composite materials for infrastructure, including—

(A) conditioning protocols, procedures and models;

(B) screening and acceptance tools; and

(C) minimum allowable design data sets that can be converted into design tools.

(b) **STANDARDS COORDINATION.**—The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall assure that the appropriate Institute staff consult regularly with standards developers, members of the composites industry, institutions of higher education, and other stakeholders in order to facilitate the adoption of standards for use of composite materials in infrastructure that are based on the research and testing results and other information developed by the Institute.

(c) **FUNDING.**—The Secretary of Commerce shall devote \$11,000,000 to carry out this section for fiscal year 2019, subject to the availability of appropriations, to come from amounts made available pursuant to section 2(b)(2)(A)(iv) of this Act. This section shall be carried out using funds otherwise appropriated by law after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DATA SCIENCE.

The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall continue to support the development of artificial intelligence and data science, including through—

(1) the expansion of the Institute’s capabilities, including scientific staff and research infrastructure;

(2) the implementation of rigorous scientific testing to support the development of trustworthy and safe artificial intelligence and data systems;

(3) the development of machine learning and other artificial intelligence applications to support measurement science research programs and take steps to modernize the Institute’s research infrastructure; and

(4) the development and publication of new cybersecurity tools, encryption methods, and best practices for artificial intelligence and data science.

SEC. 7. INTERNET OF THINGS.

The Secretary, acting through the Director, shall continue to conduct research with respect to and support the expanded connectivity, interoperability, and security of interconnected systems and other aspects of the internet of things, including through—

(1) the development of new tools and methodologies for cybersecurity of the internet of things;

(2) the development of technologies to address network congestion and device interference, such as the development of testing tools for next generation wireless communications, internet of things protocols, coexistence of wireless communications systems, and spectrum sharing;

(3) convening experts in the public and private sectors to develop recommendations for accelerating the adoption of sound interoperability standards, guidelines, and best practices for the internet of things; and

(4) the development and publication of new cybersecurity tools, encryption methods, and best practices for internet of things security.

SEC. 8. HIRING AND MANAGEMENT.

(a) **DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary, acting through the Director, may—

(1) appoint, without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code (other than sections 3303, 3328, and 3330e of such chapter), qualified candidates to scientific, engineering, and professional positions for carrying out research and development functions which require the services of specially qualified personnel relating to cybersecurity and quantum information science and technology and such other areas of national research priorities as the Secretary, acting through the Director, may determine; and

(2) fix the rate of basic pay of any individual appointed under paragraph (1), at a rate not in excess of the basic rate of pay of the Vice President under section 104 of title 3, United States Code, without regard to title 5, United States Code.

(b) **LIMITATION.**—The Director may appoint not more than 10 individuals under this section.

(c) **SUNSET.**—The authority under this section shall expire on the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) The term “Director” means the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(2) The term “Framework” means the Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology and referred to in Executive Order 13800 issued on May 11, 2017 (82 Fed. Reg. 22391 et seq.).

(3) The term “Institute” means the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(4) The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given such term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

(5) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Commerce.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 6229, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to speak on behalf of my bill, H.R. 6229, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Reauthorization Act of 2018.

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 all Americans’ quality of life.

Since its establishment in 1901, NIST has helped position U.S. technology at the leading edge, making contributions to innumerable products and services that rely in some way on technology, measurement, and standards.

Such technology ranges from developing biometric standards for law enforcement or new materials for protective equipment of our Nation’s firefighters to atomic clocks and earthquake-resistant skyscrapers. This legislation authorizes NIST’s industrial technology services, construction activities, and bolsters the scientific and technical research and services lab activities for 2 years.

NIST has the mission and capabilities to contribute to areas critical to the U.S. global competitiveness. To this end, this legislation authorizes increased investments in four emerging technology areas: quantum science, artificial intelligence and data science, advanced communications and the Internet of Things, and composites research and standards development.

□ 2145

These investments will launch discoveries and technical advances that will significantly affect the Nation’s economy in the coming decades. As we have heard in our committee, the potential for artificial intelligence to help humans and further scientific discoveries is immense.

By advancing our ability to store and process large and complex data sets through AI and machine learning, computers are able to refine and enhance future predictions. This advanced technology is already creating tremendous developments in many fields, including medicine, manufacturing, and finance.

This legislation also directs NIST to capitalize on its deep and varied expertise in advanced composites. NIST is directed to connect research that will provide the evidence and data needed to set industry standards and design guidelines to encourage the safe adoption and application of composite materials in U.S. infrastructure projects.

NIST plays a very important role in protecting the Nation from cyber threats through its ongoing cybersecurity research. NIST is examining the applications of blockchain technology, and creating voluntary frameworks and standards to help reduce cyber risks to Federal agencies, multiple industries, and critical infrastructure. Its cybersecurity technical standards and risk management frameworks are widely regarded as one of the best and most comprehensive in the world.

I want to thank Ranking Member LIPINSKI for cosponsoring this important legislation with me. As the chairman has mentioned, he has been an essential partner with us in getting so many of our bipartisan bills put forward.

I would also like to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON for assisting in ushering this bill through the Science, Space, and Technology Committee on a bipartisan basis.

As industry's national laboratory, NIST is dedicated to supporting research and technology development in the areas of national importance from communications technology and cybersecurity to advanced manufacturing and disaster resilience.

This bill supports NIST's critical work of helping U.S. industries and improving Americans' quality of life by developing new measurement tools, providing authoritative data, and bringing stakeholders together to find solutions to ensure U.S. competitiveness in the 21st century economy.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, September 21, 2018.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, &
Technology, House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in H.R. 6229, the "National Institute of Standards and Technology Reauthorization Act of 2018." As a result of your having consulted with me concerning the bill, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will not seek a sequential referral and agrees to forego formal action on the bill.

The Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing a request for a sequential referral of H.R. 6229 at this time we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. Further, I request your support for the appointment of conferees from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform during any House-Senate conference convened on this or related legislation.

Finally, I would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the bill report filed by the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Sincerely,

TREY GOWDY.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,
SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, September 24, 2018.

Hon. TREY GOWDY,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing concerning H.R. 6229, the "National Institute of Standards and Technology Reauthorization Act of 2018," which was ordered reported by the Science Committee June 27, 2018.

I agree that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform has a valid jurisdictional interest in certain provisions of H.R. 6229, and that the Committee's jurisdiction will not be adversely affected by your decision to forego consideration of H.R. 6229. As you have requested, I will support your request for an appropriate appointment of outside conferees from your Committee in the event of a House-Senate conference on this or similar legislation should such a conference be convened.

Finally, I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6229, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Reauthorization Act of 2018, and I thank Chairwoman COMSTOCK for sponsoring this bill.

This is a bipartisan bill that provides support for NIST's important work carrying out scientific and technical research, and assisting small- and medium-sized U.S. manufacturers. The agency's work helps to advance standards development in critical areas of innovation across all sectors of our economy.

NIST's core mission is to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness. Through its laboratories and user facilities, NIST carries out world-class measurement science and facilitates the development of standards for emerging technologies.

Standards ensure users that promising technologies have been rigorously tested for safety, effectiveness, and reliability. NIST provides its services and expertise to other agencies, academic researchers, and the private sector.

This bill provides funding to support NIST's work in critical areas of national importance, including advanced communications, cybersecurity and privacy, the Internet of Things, quantum information science, and infrastructure resilience. The wireless demands of the 21st century require the advances in measurement science that NIST is carrying out.

The devastating hurricanes and other natural disasters that have plagued our communities underscore the importance of NIST's work in disaster resiliency and new infrastructure materials.

In addition, this bill provides significant funding for NIST's quantum information science and artificial intelligence research programs. Quantum technology has promising applications in healthcare, navigation, encryption, and many other areas. We are only beginning to explore the significant advances that artificial intelligence, or AI, may bring to the world.

At the same time, there are significant policy implications for AI, and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on issues dealing with ethics, workforce impacts, and the human-AI interface as these technologies move forward.

Finally, with five Nobel Prize-winning scientists in its ranks, NIST continues to attract some of the Nation's leading scientists. Even so, recruiting and retaining top talent is a challenge, and this bill provides flexibility to help NIST bring on and train the best and brightest measurement scientists in order to remain at the leading edge of emerging technologies.

I am also happy to see the bill increases support for the labs program and funding for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program. In the future, I hope my colleagues will support increases for necessary improvement to NIST's aging lab infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6229, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK), the chairwoman of the Research and Technology Subcommittee, for yielding me time to speak on her legislation.

The bill, H.R. 6229, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Reauthorization Act of 2018, is an important bill that has been worked on both by Chairwoman COMSTOCK and the gentleman from Illinois, Subcommittee Ranking Member DAN LIPINSKI, and I appreciate their taking the initiative on this legislation.

This bipartisan bill was unanimously approved by the Science, Space, and Technology Committee in June. It authorizes NIST's research and technology programs for 2 years.

The NIST Reauthorization Act ensures that the research and development conducted by NIST keeps the United States on the cutting edge of global technological capabilities.

NIST is one of the Nation's oldest physical science laboratories. The technology, standards, and measurements provided by NIST support U.S. competitiveness in key industries, including manufacturing, nanomaterials,

computing, communications, and cybersecurity.

These have real-world applications. Through basic research, NIST sets standards and facilitates the implementation and use of technologies that impact the lives of our constituents every day. Examples include providing the precise official time for the United States that we see on our computers and smartphones, to the thresholds for the smoke detectors that protect our families and homes.

For instance, NIST research and standards have improved the self-contained breathing apparatuses worn by more than a million American firefighters.

NIST also provides modeling techniques that allow scientists to develop and test cancer therapies using active viruses that cannot be studied using standard practices. And NIST's Smart Grid work is improving the reliability and capability of our electric grid.

These are just a handful of examples that illustrate why NIST's scientific and technical research and services are critical to American innovation and industrial competitiveness.

Chairwoman COMSTOCK's bill significantly increases NIST's research to facilitate commercial use of emerging technologies. Specifically, this legislation increases the core NIST laboratories account by \$125 million to transform more basic and early stage research into usable innovations and new technologies.

It accelerates basic quantum information science research and standards development, and provides funds to address fundamental research gaps, enabling the U.S. to take the lead in developing quantum standards and measurements.

Chairwoman COMSTOCK's bill allows NIST to expand its fundamental and applied cybersecurity research to address key questions relating to privacy, security, and vulnerability of software tools and communications networks.

It expands the research infrastructure and scientific staff needed to develop the Institute's capabilities in artificial intelligence and data science, including rigorous scientific testing to support the development of trustworthy AI systems.

It further directs NIST to expand its composites research and standards development to facilitate the adoption of composite technology in American infrastructure.

Finally, the legislation encourages NIST to continue to examine the Internet of Things and address measurement and security challenges created by the convergence of digital technologies with the physical world.

By supporting this bill, Congress ensures continued U.S. innovation leadership in quantum science, artificial intelligence, big data science, cybersecurity, the Internet of Things, and resilient infrastructure.

We can thank Chairwoman COMSTOCK for her work on this legislation. I urge

my colleagues to support H.R. 6229 and the critical work done by NIST.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. LESKO).

Mrs. LESKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 6229, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Reauthorization Act of 2018.

As a cosponsor of this legislation, I understand the importance of positioning the United States as a strong leader in scientific research and development. This bill supports basic quantum information science research and standards development, and provides funds to address fundamental research gaps, create a stronger workforce pipeline, and allow the United States to take the lead in developing global quantum standards and measures.

This bill also supports developments in our national security. As cybersecurity threats from across the globe increase, it is important the Federal Government have the guidelines in place to defend against potential cyber attacks and protect our sensitive information against foreign adversaries.

The bill also provides for the Institute to expand its fundamental and applied cybersecurity research to address key questions relating to measurement of privacy, security, and vulnerability of software tools and communications networks.

I want to thank Representative COMSTOCK for introducing this legislation to push the United States forward, and for Chairman SMITH's leadership in advancing the scientific position of the United States.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, NIST's expertise across many fields is critical to our economy, our research enterprise, and our manufacturing sector. This bill puts NIST in a strong position to carry out its work through the end of fiscal 2019.

I want to particularly highlight the strong support for the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the Manufacturing USA programs, which receive a robust authorization under the Industrial Technology Services account, and I want to thank my majority colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee for working with me to match the agency request for fiscal year 2019.

I have a strong relationship with Manufacturing USA's Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute located in Chicago, just outside my district. Through partnerships with universities, manufacturers, nonprofits, and government entities, they work to develop the technology-enabled manufacturing tools industry needs, pilot them on the factory floor, and train the manufacturing workforce.

The digital manufacturing hub is just 1 of 14 Manufacturing USA institutes across the country, each with its own technology focus. Together, they are

working to ensure that we have a competitive manufacturing sector in the U.S. into the future.

Manufacturing USA and the Manufacturing Extension Partnership play a key role in keeping our economy strong and creating the jobs of tomorrow.

Beyond manufacturing, I also want to highlight the critical position pay authority this bill gives NIST to hire talented cybersecurity and quantum information science professionals.

□ 2200

It is often difficult for Federal agencies to attract top-level talent in these fields, because the Federal pay scale cannot compete with the private sector.

This bill grants a limited exemption to the Federal pay scale to ensure that NIST will have access to the right people to lead the Nation and the world in cybersecurity and quantum information science.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairwoman COMSTOCK again for introducing this bill. I want to urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this important piece of legislation and to thank my colleagues and Ranking Member LIPINSKI for their support.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6229, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY VETERANS' HEALTH INITIATIVE ACT

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6398) to authorize the Department of Energy to conduct collaborative research with the Department of Veterans Affairs in order to improve healthcare services for veterans in the United States, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6398

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Department of Energy Veterans' Health Initiative Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act: