

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I come to the floor because this week, hopefully, our House colleagues will be taking up legislation that they have named America COMPETES. My colleague was just here on the Senate floor talking about the legislation we passed last year, and we are glad our colleagues are finally addressing this in the House of Representatives.

I said “glad” they are “addressing”—we are happy about that because, between 1996 and 2015, federally funded research led to over \$1 trillion in economic growth and millions of new jobs. So we know that when we invest, we see a big return in our economy.

What we know, however, is that R&D investment is at its lowest point in nearly 45 years, as measured as a percentage of GDP. That is where we have been going. And the rest of the world isn't waiting.

Overall, U.S. R&D spending places us ninth globally, behind advanced economies like South Korea, Japan, and Germany, and far below the fifth place ranking that we held in the 1990s.

So this is why we need to do something, and that is why we passed what was called the United States Innovation and Competition Act last year and why we encouraged our colleagues to take it up. There is a competition for global leadership in technology in a range of areas—semiconductors, manufacturing, artificial intelligence, low-Earth orbit satellites. And there are countries that are very eager to make investments to try to capture those jobs that I mentioned that come as a result of investment in technology.

We know that we tried to solve this problem before; that is, to stay competitive. We passed an America COMPETES Act in 2007, and we passed one in 2010. And we were trying to stay competitive with changing economies and the information age that we now are in. These acts were intended to double the key research accounts at the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy, but, unfortunately, the appropriations authorized did not materialize. In large part, we had a 2008 recession and subsequent fiscal sequestration, and we reduced the NSF and DOE budgets.

So we had the right idea. We had a year or so of activity that really tried to get us on the right track, and then fiscal issues put us behind.

So job openings today and the opportunities for us to grow our economy by making this investment are just monumental. And that is why we hope that this is a bipartisan effort by the Senate and, ultimately, a bipartisan effort by the House to come together to make the investments to help fill these jobs of the future.

Job openings in computer science occupations are expected to exceed 1 million in the next few years, nearly 400,000 just in the area of cyber security alone.

The Wall Street Journal reported that planned growth in the U.S. semiconductor industry will require up to 90,000 more workers by 2025—90,000 more workers just in that 1 sector. And these are very well-paying jobs.

According to the National Science Board, the only way that the United States can fill the gaps in these STEM workers is to double the number of women in the STEM workforce and double the number of other underrepresented minorities in these jobs. And that is exactly what we are trying to do with this legislation.

On our manufacturing sector—which we have a very large manufacturing sector in the Northwest, driven by aerospace but also other forms of transportation, and it also includes small and medium-sized manufacturing—but one organization estimated that it will take up to \$250 billion over 10 years to help us upgrade our existing infrastructure in manufacturing and equipment to be competitive.

So that means we must do our part. Many of these industries will do their part. But on the R&D side, we must continue to do our part.

Other countries are investing heavily. On the semiconductor advanced manufacturing facilities, which are very, very expensive to build, we just heard of a major announcement by Intel a few weeks ago about their investment in the State of Ohio. These facilities can cost \$30 billion over 10 years, including \$20 billion in just the capital expenses. Other countries are making huge investments to help build cheaper foundries, anywhere from 30 to 50 percent of the investment in Asia.

So, as a result, over the last several decades, the United States has lost a big share of what they had in the semiconductor manufacturing chip sector, going from about 37 percent of the market for production from the United States down to 12 percent today.

So the United States must respond, and we must continue to make investments in these sectors. My colleagues, as we had this floor debate, will remember, we talked about a \$52 billion investment—an enormous amount of money. But I asked my colleagues who helped us get this legislation and those who weren't with us at that moment to consider this information: The semiconductor shortage cost vehicle manufacturers, just in 2021, \$210 billion. In 1 year, our shortage cost us \$210 billion.

So I think making this investment in chip production in the United States is critical. It is time we try again with our House colleagues. It is time that we engage in a bipartisan legislative process to get this legislation to the President's desk.

I know the House will consider many amendments on Friday when they are supposed to take up this bill. We in the Commerce Committee had over 230 amendments filed. We approved 130 amendments. We had a 6-hour markup. We had healthy debate on amendments, and then the Senate proceeded to an

open-floor debate and hundreds of amendments were filed here on the Senate floor.

So I encourage our colleagues in the House to have their amendments, to consider these ideas, and to come to an effort with us to get this legislation passed.

We know that this would be the largest 5-year commitment to public R&D in our Nation's history. We need it for the job growth. We need it to stay competitive.

This legislation would also make a \$15 billion investment in growing and diversifying that STEM workforce. As I said, given the large amount of job openings in this sector, we are not going to find the people to take them unless we are diversifying our workforce.

This would establish a Senate-confirmed position on improving STEM diversity and make sure that NSF and the investments we would make would help us not only assure diversity but geographic diversity within the United States.

This legislation would also create a first-of-a-kind NSF—National Science Foundation—tech directorate to help accelerate the development and translation of new technologies within the United States to the future and helping those jobs grow more quickly.

Now, I know a lot of people, probably at the beginning: If NSF was already doing a good job, if DOE was already doing a good job, why do we have to do something different?

Well, the issue is the United States is producing a lot of R&D, and that R&D is being used by other people. It is actually documented public information that ends up getting used and translated by somebody else hungrier, faster moving, with opportunity, and thereby getting translated. So this bill addresses that. This bill, with the creation of a tech directorate, is about accelerating the R&D that we do and turning it into real manufacturing at a faster rate.

We call this tech transfer. And if you have any kind of university in your State, you know exactly what I am talking about, and these universities play a key role in tech transfer. In fact, tech transfer in this realm of university has been responsible for about 4 million jobs over the last 20 years, I think it is—the last 20 years. So these are big investments that they have supported. They have supported over 4 million jobs.

So USICA would make an investment of 17 billion in the Department of Energy and authorize the tripling of the manufacturing extension partnership to help with those manufacturing opportunities and also make investments in tech hubs to help create private sector investment and the same kind of workforce opportunities for the future.

As I mentioned, the announcement by Intel in Ohio to build a new foundry and the expensive cost of building a new foundry was interesting news because it wasn't in the same places that

investments in chip fabrication has been done so far. And yet the CEO of the company said, if we pass this legislation, there could be 100 billion in investment.

That is important because we have to understand how important chip fabrication is, semiconductors are, to the information age that we live in today—how important it is that we not lose market share any lower than 12 percent and we actually start going back in the other direction so that we can grow these jobs in the future.

So I just want to emphasize: There is a lot to agree on with House colleagues. Both bills call for a \$52 billion investment in the semiconductor industry. Both bills call for major investment, about \$160 billion, in critical R&D Agencies like the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy. Both bills recognize the need to invest in creating tech hubs and making investments in the domestic supply chain. Both bills call for growing the diversity of our STEM workforce to meet workforce gaps. Both bills attempt to address disparities in our trade and research policies that I was just mentioning—trying to not let people just grab the R&D that the United States does and translate that, but make sure that we have strong laws in preventing intellectual property theft where it occurs and making investments in American businesses. And we know that there are other provisions that we will be able to agree on as well. So with our investment in R&D reaching a 45-year low, now is the time to grow our economy.

I hope our colleagues in the House will join in a bipartisan effort. We stand ready in the Senate to join a serious discussion to get this legislation onto the President's desk and grow these jobs. It is a very important economic opportunity for the United States and continues our leadership.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3565

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, as our Nation continues to battle against COVID-19, we know that the best way forward for defeating this virus is making sure Americans have adequate prevention and treatment options against this terrible illness.

While I understand that we are still learning about COVID-19 every day, I share the frustrations of public health leaders and the American people at the Federal Government's lack of proactive leadership in fighting this virus. Even with a vaccine developed under the previous administration, President Biden has not been able to slow COVID-19's spread.

The Federal Government's most important role during a public health crisis is to provide accurate information to the American people. Unfortunately, over the past year, there has been mixed messaging, cruel and unfair finger-pointing, baseless censorship, and a

striking lack of effort put into comprehensive public health education efforts.

You should be able to get a test, period, but many Americans have been frustrated at the lack of at-home tests as the virus has continued to spread under President Biden. However, as we seek to ensure the health and well-being of American families, we must do so while using taxpayer dollars responsibly.

It is imperative that the Federal Government do everything in its power to complete our public health mission in a manner that prioritizes support for domestic manufacturing. That is why, as soon as I learned about the administration's intent to purchase 500 million at-home COVID-19 rapid tests for the public earlier this year, I wrote to the HHS Secretary and urged him to prioritize the purchase of American-made COVID tests and prohibit the purchase of tests made in communist China.

We know that at least two FDA-authorized at-home COVID-19 antigen tests are manufactured in communist China and imported into the United States. The last thing the American tax dollars should go towards is funding a country that is guilty of starting the pandemic, covering up and lying about the origins of COVID-19, committing genocide again millions of Uighurs, destroying democracy in Hong Kong, persecuting Tibetans, harassing and threatening Taiwan, stealing American technology and research, and engaging in illegal and unfair trade practices.

Giving communist China taxpayer money would be a complete abuse of the public trust. Sadly, although unsurprisingly, that is exactly what the Biden administration has done in its decision to funnel \$1.28 billion to Andon Health, a Chinese company. That is right—instead of supporting American manufacturing and exclusively ordering American-made tests, the Biden administration is handing nearly \$1.3 billion of taxpayer funds to a company in communist China. This isn't a secret; it was widely reported by Reuters last month.

I am sure we all remember Biden's promise to "Buy American." It is a commitment I and many of my colleagues in the Senate applauded. But, like so many promises made by this President, it has been broken.

That is why I introduced the No Taxpayer Dollars for Communist China COVID Tests Act—a bill to right the wrongs of the Biden administration and prohibit buying or importing COVID-19 tests made in communist China with U.S. tax dollars. I would like to thank Senator ROGER MARSHALL for cosponsoring this bill.

We need this legislation because President Biden has announced that the government will be purchasing 500 million more at-home tests, and just last week, the Department of Defense announced it was buying more than 100

million tests from Andon Health to achieve Biden's goal. That is more money for communist China's economy and less investment in our own economy.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to support American manufacturers, especially as our economy recovers from COVID-19. We cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that it was the Chinese Communist Party that lied about this deadly virus, tried to hide it, and has continuously covered up the origins of COVID-19. We know that every dollar spent on COVID-19 tests manufactured in communist China goes directly to supporting General Secretary Xi and his genocidal regime.

People in this town think taxpayer money is free money to use as they want. They forget that for every dollar collected, there is a hard-working American who earned that money by the sweat of their brow. We have a duty and obligation to ensure that we spend that money wisely.

Thankfully, we won't lose anything or experience shortages by not giving these contracts to Chinese companies. It means HHS will have to work harder to get good, responsible contracts. But the Biden administration's willingness to fund the communist Chinese economy instead of the American economy is an absolute disgrace. It is another example of Joe Biden's willingness to appease dictators and forsake democracy, freedom, and human rights.

So, with many of these tests already repurchased and the Biden administration planning to spend billions more taxpayers dollars, it is important that Congress act on this immediately, which is why I will be asking to pass this good and commonsense bill today.

As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 3565, which is at the desk; further, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Is there objection?

Mr. WYDEN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. I will offer another proposal shortly as an alternative to Senator SCOTT's unanimous consent request, and I am going to make a few brief points before I do that.

I want to make clear that on this side, nobody—nobody—takes a backseat to anyone else when it comes to standing up to the horrific abuses of the Chinese Government against its people as well as its economic cheating that has ripped off American jobs and our prosperity.

That is why I worked with our colleague from Ohio, Senator BROWN, to close once and for all an immoral and unjustifiable loophole that allowed some products made with forced labor to enter into the United States.