



COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**  
Lamar Smith, Chairman

For Immediate Release  
May 24, 2016

Media Contacts: Alicia Criscuolo, Thea McDonald  
(202) 225-6371

**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)**

*Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization  
Act of 2016*

**Chairman Smith:** This legislation modernizes the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development- or NITRD- Program. I thank Mr. LaHood for his work on this issue.

This bill had bipartisan support in the last Congress and I hope will receive that same support today.

In this digital age, it is critically important to protect our nation's computer networking systems.

This bill provides the coordinated R&D efforts necessary to improve cyber and data security nationwide. Better network security promotes U.S. competitiveness, enhances national security and creates high-tech jobs.

The NITRD program implements the *High Performance Computing Act of 1991*. It represents the federal government's main R&D portfolio for unclassified networking, computing, software, cybersecurity and related information technologies.

Currently, 21 federal agencies are contributing members of NITRD, with over 20 additional agencies participating in the program.

This legislation serves as the mechanism for interagency coordination of R&D to ensure better focus and no duplication of research efforts among federal agencies or the private sector. It rebalances R&D portfolios to focus less on short-term goals and more on large-scale, long-term interdisciplinary research.

While this bill does not authorize any specific funding amounts, spending totals on NITRD program activities totals more than \$4.4 billion annually. More than \$1.1 billion of this is spent by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and more than \$720 million by the Department of Energy (DOE).

The bill also updates and adapts the underlying High-Performance Computing statute to the realities and needs of the current vibrant computing enterprises, and codifies

work undertaken by the NITRD National Coordination Office, housed within NSF, to oversee the participating agencies.

The NITRD program has eight strategic priorities for its research:

- cybersecurity;
- autonomous, robotic systems;
- high-end computing and applications;
- exascale computing;
- human-computer interaction;
- large-scale networking;
- workforce development;
- and software design.

Technologies that come from these research priorities are applied by both the public and private sector to protect and enhance emergency communications, the power grid, air-traffic control networks, our energy resources, scientific discovery, human exploration, new product development, and national defense systems.

This networking and information technology ultimately supports and boosts American competitiveness, enhances national security, helps strengthen the economy, and creates millions of jobs.

As evidenced by hearings held by this Committee, including the most recent on the FDIC, cyber breaches have become all too common.

This legislation encourages agencies to increase understanding of ways to detect, prevent and recover from actions that compromise or threaten computer-based systems.

So this legislation is critical to the future of our country's research and development programs in networking and information technology. I again thank Mr. LaHood for his interest in this subject and urge my colleagues to support the bill.

###