



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

For Immediate Release  
March 16, 2016

Media Contact: Zachary Kurz  
(202) 225-6371

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

*An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Institute of Standards and Technology for Fiscal Year 2017*

**Chairman Smith:** Thank you, Chairwoman Comstock, and thank you Dr. May for being with us today.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) supports fundamental scientific research that is critical to American innovation and competitiveness. NIST helps maintain industrial and technical standards and manages cybersecurity guidelines for federal agencies.

Our challenge is to set funding priorities that ensure America remains a leader in the global marketplace of ideas and products, while also being able to balance the government's budget.

As Chairwoman Comstock pointed out, the area of proposed funding of \$47 million for the National Network of Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI) program is of particular concern with the NIST Fiscal Year 2017 budget request.

In 2014, this Committee and the full House approved H.R. 2996, the Revitalize American Manufacturing Innovation Act of 2014 (RAMI Act). The RAMI Act was subsequently included in the Fiscal Year 2015 omnibus bill and signed into law by the President.

This bill authorized up to \$5 million per year for NNMI from NIST. The bulk of the program funding is to be transferred from the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) budget. Why hasn't this happened? It must if the program is to continue.

In addition, there are concerns surrounding the explosion at NIST that occurred when a senior officer with NIST Police Services attempted to manufacture methamphetamine in a NIST facility.

It is surprising that a federal agency didn't know that a meth lab was being run on its property, and without an explosion, it might have never been discovered. The meth lab explosion and subsequent investigation have raised serious concerns about the safety and security of the entire NIST campus.

Information obtained during this Committee's investigation of the meth lab at NIST appears to show a culture of waste, fraud, abuse, and misconduct at NIST Police Services.

For example, time and attendance fraud occurs regularly at NIST Police Services. In one instance, 84 hours of overtime was recorded during a two week period while a full-time shift was being covered. If accurate, that would mean the officer worked 16 hours a day, seven days per week.

It also appears that police equipment worth tens of thousands of dollars is unaccounted for or missing from the police force.

These unfortunate examples undermine NIST's mission to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness, which enhances economic security and improves our quality of life.

I hope to hear what steps have been taken in the wake of the meth lab explosion to prevent further misuse of taxpayers' dollars. Just as important is to find out why NIST continues to ignore the RAMI Act.

I look forward to hearing from our witness today and yield back.

###