The Honorable Penny Pritzker  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Pritzker:

Recent news reports detail an explosion that took place at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) facility in Gaithersburg, Maryland on July 19, 2015. Initial reports suggest the explosion may have been the result of the manufacturing of the illegal drug methamphetamine. Additionally, according to the Associated Press, the explosion may have been connected to a NIST security officer who was injured in the explosion. If these initial reports are verified, the fact that this explosion took place at a taxpayer funded NIST facility potentially endangering NIST employees is of great concern.

I request that you provide the Committee with a briefing as soon as possible, but no later than Wednesday, July 29, with all obtainable facts surrounding the explosion. In addition, I request that you provide continual updates to the Committee on the situation on a weekly basis.

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology is the principal oversight committee of NIST as set forth in House Rule X.

---

1 Mathew Barakat, *Possible drug-related explosion investigated at federal lab*, ASSOCIATED PRESS, Jul. 21, 2015, Available at: http://bigstory.ap.org/article/2aa5679466644bab94e865f48a713de/possible-drug-related-explosion-investigated-federal-lab.

2 *Id.*

3 *Id.*
If you have any questions about this request, please contact Drew Colliatie of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee staff at 202-225-6371. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Lamar Smith
Chairman
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

cc: The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, Ranking Minority Member, House Committee on Science, Space and Technology