

OPENING STATEMENT

The Honorable Ben Quayle (R-AZ), Chairman

Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation

An Overview of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Budget for Fiscal Year 2013

March 6, 2012

Good Morning. I would like to welcome everyone to today's hearing. We will be discussing the fiscal year 2013 budget request for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and gathering details about NIST's priorities. I would like to thank Dr. Gallagher for appearing before us today. NIST has been well served by your leadership.

Before getting into the specifics of NIST's request, I would like to briefly discuss the President's 2013 budget proposal. Unfortunately, the budget submitted by the Administration a few weeks ago continues to promote the same failed policies that have made our economic situation worse. The President's budget includes the most government spending in history, the biggest tax increase in American history, and the biggest debt in history.

This proposal increases overall spending \$200 billion, to a total of \$3.8 trillion – nearly a quarter of our gross domestic product (23.3 percent). The budget will increase taxes on American families and job creators by \$1.9 trillion. While paying lip service to the need to cut debt and deficits, under the President's framework, our gross national debt will increase from \$15 trillion today to approximately \$26 trillion ten years from now. The Administration has failed to rein in spending and has failed to lay out a credible plan for bringing the deficit and debt under control. This is unsustainable and irresponsible.

Today, we examine one portion of that budget proposal, the President's FY 2013 budget request for NIST. While NIST is a smaller agency, this request does not exist within a vacuum and must be weighed in the context of our fiscal situation. NIST is a non-regulatory laboratory of the federal government tasked with making contributions to our Nation's innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology. NIST works closely alongside industry to make sure their activities improve the quality of life of Americans and the economic security of our Nation.

Although we may not be aware of NIST's impact on our lives, NIST research advances a variety of national priorities and challenges related to advanced manufacturing and materials, nanotechnology, cyber security, health information technology, advanced communications networks, and disaster resilience.

The fiscal year 2013 budget request for NIST totals \$857 million, an increase of \$106.2 million or 14.1 percent from the FY 2012 enacted level. The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology has a long, bipartisan record of support for NIST and its contributions. Given the value of NIST research to our nation's competitiveness, we are strongly supportive of NIST's Scientific and Technical Research and Services. We also recognize the work of NIST's Industrial Technology Services. However, I believe we need to do a better job of prioritizing our

investments, and a 14.1 percent budget increase is simply unrealistic in our current fiscal environment.

While we can all agree that the research NIST conducts is important for our economy, we simply cannot afford to continue spending at these rates, given our current fiscal reality. I have every reason to believe that NIST will continue to conduct innovative research while seeking ways to improve the efficiency of its programs so that this research is undertaken in a fiscally responsible manner. I am appreciative of the opportunity to learn more about how fiscal year 2013 funds will be prioritized by NIST, and I thank our witness, Dr. Gallagher for his time, today.