

Holt Helped Write Bill That Would Invest in Research and Development, Strengthen Math and Science Education

(Washington, D.C.) – Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12), a scientist and educator, today joined a majority of the House of Representatives to pass the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, which would strengthen U.S. scientific and economic leadership through investments in research and development, innovation, and education. In 2005, Holt served on an Innovation Taskforce, convened by Nancy Pelosi, which helped write the original America COMPETES Act. The bill now goes to President Obama for his signature.

“For decades, it has been clear that our investments in scientific research and education underwrite our national prosperity. Yet we’ve continued to under-invest in these economic drivers,” Holt said. “The National Academies issued a call for action in 2005 with the Rising Above the Gathering Storm report, and Congress responded by passing the America COMPETES Act. That legislation is now set to expire, and the National Academies has since issued an ominous warning about our nation’s outlook. To guarantee a secure economic future for our children and our nation, we must not fail to provide robust funding for the programs in this legislation.”

A video of Holt speaking on the bill can be found [here](#) .

The bill would put basic research programs—the Department of Energy Office of Science, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology labs—on a path toward doubling funding over ten years. The bill would authorize programs like Innovative Technology Federal Loan Guarantees, which address the immediate needs of small- and medium-sized manufacturers to access capital to become more efficient and stay competitive. The bill would create Regional Innovation Clusters to leverage collaboration and communication between businesses.

The bill also includes authorization of the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy to help advance the U.S.’s transition to a clean energy economy and to support the growth of new sectors in the economy, and the jobs that come with them. Additionally, the bill would expand and strengthen STEM education programs at all levels of education.

Holt championed a provision in the bill that would require the development of a national competitiveness and innovation strategy. The strategy would provide recommendations for facilitating entrepreneurship and innovation, strengthening the U.S. economic infrastructure and industrial base, and improving the international competitiveness of the U.S.

“The nations that are out-competing us already have national innovations strategies in place – we should too,” Holt said.

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