

§ 6603. Sense of Congress on innovation acceleration research

(a) Sense of Congress on support and promotion of innovation in the United States

It is the sense of Congress that each Federal research agency should strive to support and promote innovation in the United States through high-risk, high-reward basic research projects that—

- (1) meet fundamental technological or scientific challenges;
- (2) involve multidisciplinary work; and
- (3) involve a high degree of novelty.

(b) Sense of Congress on setting annual funding goals for basic research

It is the sense of Congress that each Executive agency that funds research in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics should set a goal of allocating an appropriate percentage of the annual basic research budget of such agency to funding high-risk, high-reward basic research projects described in subsection (a).

(c) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Basic research

The term “basic research” has the meaning given such term in the Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A–11.

(2) Executive agency

The term “Executive agency” has the meaning given such term in section 105 of title 5.

(Pub. L. 110–69, title I, §1008, Aug. 9, 2007, 121 Stat. 581; Pub. L. 114–329, title II, §204(a)(2), Jan. 6, 2017, 130 Stat. 2998.)

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the America COMPETES Act, also known as the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, and not as part of the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 which comprises this chapter.

AMENDMENTS

2017—Subsecs. (c), (d). Pub. L. 114–329 redesignated subsec. (d) as (c) and struck out former subsec. (c) which related to annual reports to Congress.

§ 6604. Interagency working group on research regulation

(a) Short title

This section may be cited as the “Research and Development Efficiency Act”.

(b) Findings

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Scientific and technological advancement have been the largest drivers of economic growth in the last 50 years, with the Federal Government being the largest investor in basic research.

(2) Substantial and increasing administrative burdens and costs in Federal research administration, particularly in the higher education sector where most federally funded research is performed, are eroding funds available to carry out basic scientific research.

(3) Federally funded grants are increasingly competitive, with the Foundation funding only approximately 1 in every 5 grant proposals.

(4) Progress has been made over the last decade in streamlining the pre-award grant application process through the Federal Government’s Grants.gov website.

(5) Post-award administrative costs have increased as Federal research agencies have continued to impose agency-unique compliance and reporting requirements on researchers and research institutions.

(6) Researchers spend as much as 42 percent of their time complying with Federal regulations, including administrative tasks such as applying for grants or meeting reporting requirements.

(c) Sense of Congress

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) administrative burdens faced by researchers may be reducing the return on investment of federally funded research and development; and

(2) it is a matter of critical importance to United States competitiveness that administrative costs of federally funded research be streamlined so that a higher proportion of federal funding is applied to direct research activities.

(d) Establishment

The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the Office of Science and Technology Policy, shall establish an interagency working group (referred to in this section as the “Working Group”) for the purpose of reducing administrative burdens on federally funded researchers while protecting the public interest through the transparency of and accountability for federally funded activities.

(e) Responsibilities

(1) In general

The Working Group shall—

(A) regularly review relevant, administration-related regulations imposed on federally funded researchers;

(B) recommend those regulations or processes that may be eliminated, streamlined, or otherwise improved for the purpose described in subsection (d);

(C) recommend ways to minimize the regulatory burden on United States institutions of higher education performing federally funded research while maintaining accountability for federal funding; and

(D) recommend ways to identify and update specific regulations to refocus on performance-based goals rather than on process while achieving the outcome described in subparagraph (C).

(2) Grant review

(A) In general

The Working Group shall—

(i) conduct a comprehensive review of Federal science agency grant proposal documents; and

(ii) develop, to the extent practicable, a simplified, uniform grant format to be used by all Federal science agencies.