

# Durbin, Foster Introduce Bicameral American Innovation Act

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Representative Bill Foster (D-IL-11) today reintroduced the bicameral *American Innovation Act*, which would provide annual budget increases of five percent, plus inflation, for cutting-edge research at five federal research agencies: the National Science Foundation; the Department of Energy Office of Science; the Department of Defense Science and Technology Programs; the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research Services; and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science Directorate. The legislation would position the U.S. as a leader in development and discovery for decades to come by creating steady, sustained funding for breakthrough research at America’s top research agencies.

“Where would we be in America today without research and innovation? For years, I have said that the most important investment we can make in our future is in scientific research. If we want to spur job growth, improve national security, and develop the technologies of the future, then we must empower our federal research agencies. The *American Innovation Act* would provide the robust funding needed to ensure America leads the world in breakthrough discoveries,” Durbin said.

“I’m proud to work with Senator Durbin on this legislation to expand federal investment in scientific research,” said Foster. “Since World War II, investments in science and technology have helped expand our economy, create millions of jobs, and advance our national security. As we confront new challenges, it’s critical that our scientists have the resources they need to help ensure our nation remains at the forefront of research and innovation.”

Research and development (R&D) funding in the United States has lagged in recent decades. In the 1960s, the United States invested roughly 12 percent of its budget on research and development—that number is now less than four percent. Total nondefense R&D now accounts for less than two percent of federal spending. Between 1960 and 1980, federal R&D spending as a share of GDP averaged about 1.4 percent per year. However, federal R&D investments now average just below 0.8 percent per year. Meanwhile, China’s research intensity (GDP expenditures on R&D) has increased sharply since the early 2000s – if this trend continues, China will soon surpass the U.S. in government-backed R&D.

The *American Innovation Act* is cosponsored by U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Alex Padilla (D-CA), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Peter Welch (D-VT).

The legislation has earned endorsements from American Mathematical Society; American Chemical Society; American Geophysical Union; American Society of Mechanical Engineers; Association of American Universities; Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities; The Coalition for Academic Scientific Computing; The Computing Research Association; Council on Undergraduate Research; The Federation of American Scientists; Fusion Industry Association; The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers; Society of Women Engineers; the University of Illinois System; and the University of Chicago.