Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the project named the "Advanced Technology Learning and Skills (ATLAS) Mobile Lab" in fiscal year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, located at 800 Drillfield Drive, Ste 134, Blacksburg, Va 24061.

The funding would be used for a mobile semiconductor hands-on lab to bring microelectronics career exposure and public-facing STEM engagement to students and communities across Virginia.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds it helps support national priorities for domestic semiconductor production and associated workforce needs and it would be a mobile resource that could be deployed to schools, youth development programs, community events, and other workforce readiness initiatives throughout Virginia's 8th district and across the Commonwealth where STEM infrastructure may be limited. Virginia Tech will work in partnership with industry to ensure alignment with near and long-term workforce needs as well as Virginia Cooperative Extension, which has a presence throughout Virginia, administers 4-H, and has a successful track record of reaching thousands of youth through its health sciences-focused mobile lab.

Semiconductor manufacturing and technological improvements are key U.S. government priorities as we look to rapidly develop, improve, and adopt artificial intelligence and other key technologies and the National Institute for Standards and Technology has been central to technological improvements and workforce growth in this emerging industry. There is currently a global shortage of semiconductors, and having consistent access to cutting edge semiconductor technologies is central to supply chain resilience and technological improvements for advanced technologies across a wide array of fields, including healthcare, communications, transportation, AI, and quantum, and more. While the semiconductor industry is rapidly growing in Northern Virginia, the United States continues to face workforce shortages in semiconductors, microelectronics, AI hardware, and engineering technician roles. This program seeks to support early education about semiconductors, and in doing so, to begin to close the gap in workforce needs and make advancements in measurement science, standards, materials, instrumentation, testing, and manufacturing capabilities for semiconductors.

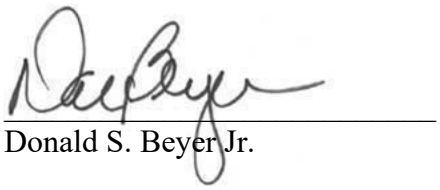
The program will support NIST's directives to assist the development of technology and procedures needed to modernize manufacturing processes, to improve manufacturability,

functionality, and cost-effectiveness, and to facilitate the more rapid commercialization of products based on new scientific discoveries in fields such as automation, electronics, advanced materials, biotechnology, and optical technologies; and to provide educational institutions with current information, techniques, and advice for the achievement of higher quality and productivity based on current scientific and technical development.

This project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by section 272 of title 15, United States Code.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,



Donald S. Beyer Jr.