

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-4706

March 17, 2022

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lucas, Chair Cantwell, and Ranking Member Wicker:

The New Democrat Coalition (NDC) has continued to support swift action on legislation that invests in American innovation, creates more jobs, and grows the economy, and we thank you for your leadership. For the U.S. to truly lead the global economy, we need to unleash untapped potential and resources all across the nation, including by investing in the communities that have been left behind. As Congress begins the conference process for the United States Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) and the America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing, Pre-Eminence in Technology, and Economic Strength Act (America COMPETES) Act, we urge you to maintain language from the Sec. 110001 of H.R. 4521, the America COMPETES Act that authorizes a pilot version of the bipartisan Rebuilding Economies and Creating Opportunities for More People Everywhere to Excel Act (RECOMPETE Act).

Roughly 30 percent of the U.S. population live in economically distressed communities¹ that have largely been left out of the economic growth, jobs, opportunities, and investment that have been concentrated in a handful of major metropolitan areas in recent decades. The final bipartisan innovation bill is a critical opportunity to ensure every American has the opportunity to succeed in the economy of the future. The Recompete pilot grant program included in the America COMPETES Act would authorize \$4 billion for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to carry out a pilot of a new federal grant program to empower persistently distressed communities to develop, implement, and carry out 10-year comprehensive economic development strategies in order to create lasting economic growth, opportunities, and jobs.

The RECOMPETE Act was introduced by Reps. Kilmer and Herrera-Beutler in the House and by Sens. Coons, Bennet, and Klobuchar in the Senate, with the support of over 50 bipartisan Members of Congress, including 39 members of the New Democrat Coalition. It has been endorsed by the National League of Cities, the New Democrat Coalition, the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, the Progressive Policy Institute, Third Way, the Economic Innovation Group, and the Federal Issues Committee of the Washington State Association of Counties.

Over recent decades, the U.S. has significantly underinvested in both scientific and engineering research and economic development. Both USICA and the America COMPETES Acts make critical investments to spur American innovation, create jobs and opportunities, empower the next generation of American innovators, and promote American values and ingenuity on the global stage. The Recompete pilot compliments those efforts, including investments in new regional innovation hubs, so we can maximize our investments and leverage the talent of hard-working Americans all across this country. We urge you to maintain the Recompete pilot in the final bill and look forward to working together to take swift action and ensure the bill is signed into law for the benefit of our communities and our country.

Sincerely,



Rep. Derek Kilmer
Chair Emeritus
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Suzan DelBene
Chair
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Scott Peters
Vice Chair
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Ami Bera
Vice Chair
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Sharice Davids
Vice Chair
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Rep. Ann McLane Kuster
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Rep. Chrissy Houlahan
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Rep. Kathy Manning
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Rep. Bradley S. Schneider
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