

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 14, 2006

The Honorable Ted Stevens
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Stevens and Ranking Member Inouye:

As you continue your work on the Fiscal Year 2007 Defense Appropriations bill, we are writing to urge you to support the university-based semiconductor Focus Center Research Program (FCRP). The government funding for the FCRP program has been traditionally split between the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the Government/Industry Co-sponsorship of University Research (GICUR) program in DDR&E. This year, the budget request for DARPA (PE 0601101E—Electronic Sciences) includes \$10 million for FCRP, but the budget request does not include any funds for GICUR (PE 0601111D8Z).

For Fiscal Year 2007 we request that you provide \$10 million for the Focus Center Research Program in PE 0601111D8Z—the same level as Fiscal Year 2006. The total government funding of \$20 million will then be matched dollar for dollar by the semiconductor industry to allow a combined \$40 million total to be invested in the FCRP.

The FCRP is a model of government-industry-academia cooperation. In 1998, the U.S. semiconductor industry and the Department of Defense jointly launched it to create advanced semiconductor technology to support defense and industry needs. Industry matches the federal investment, resulting in research that is targeted to solving challenges that must be overcome to advance this ever-evolving technology. This research benefits our economy as a whole and has enabled the United States to maintain its world-leadership in this arena.

Advanced semiconductor technology is critical to our country's national security effort, homeland security and intelligence needs. Last year the Defense Science Board's microchip supply task force recommended that DOD increase funding for the FCRP. DARPA has already produced results from the research and transitioned it to the next stage in many areas including mixed signal mobile electronics and low power devices.

Continued funding for the FCRP is consistent with the strong bipartisan support for strengthening America's competitiveness through increased funding in the physical sciences and expansion of the science and engineering talent pool. The research is conducted through five Focus Centers, involving 35 universities across the nation. All of the funding for the program goes directly to universities, which were selected on their research merits by DOD and industry through a competitive process.

We believe it is critically important for the government to continue to join with industry and academia to support the FCRP, a long-term program designed to maintain the technology leadership of the United States. Therefore, we would be grateful if you appropriate an additional \$10 million for FCRP in fiscal year 2007.

Sincerely,

George Allen

AM Yin

Sally Chambliss

Barbara Boxer

John Cornyn

Mike Crapo

Susan Collins

Chris Hatch

Frank Lautenberg

P.D. Kennedy

Tom F. Kelly

Joe Lieberman

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