

March XX, 2016

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Appropriations
H-309, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Honda
Acting Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Honda:

As you begin preparing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, we respectfully urge you to appropriate \$8 million to the National Institutes of Standards and Technology within the U.S. Department of Commerce budget, in order to restore the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program.

The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program is a public-private partnership designed to recognize and improve performance of the nation's businesses, hospitals, schools, non-profit organizations and government agencies. The Baldrige Program raises awareness about the importance of performance excellence in driving the U.S. and global economy; provides organizational assessment tools and criteria; educates leaders in businesses, schools, health care organizations, and government and nonprofit agencies about the practices of best-in-class organizations; and recognizes national role models and honors them with the only Presidential Award for performance excellence.

The Baldrige Program was established in 1987 by Congress and President Ronald Reagan. Federal funding for the Baldrige Program was phased out in 2012. The Baldrige Foundation, a not-for-profit entity and private partner, currently aids the Baldrige Program by supporting costs associated with identifying, validating performance and awarding recognition to national leaders in their field, using diminishing endowment funds. The Foundation has no oversight of the Baldrige Program and has no involvement in the national and state award processes. Without a federal appropriation, the Baldrige Foundation will not be able to sustain the program beyond the next several years.

Restoration of federal funding through the National Institutes of Standards and Technology within the U.S. Department of Commerce assures the Baldrige Program's continued reach across key sectors of the economy, including health care and education, and strengthens the formal nation-wide network of state and regional programs, with approximately \$24 billion in annual economic benefit. The ratio of benefits for the U.S. economy to Baldrige Program costs is 820:1.

The Baldrige Program has a proven track-record of improving large and small businesses in the service and manufacturing sectors alike, as well as education, health care, and public institutions. We appreciate your consideration of restoring this critical funding and look forward to working with you as the FY 2017 appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,