



President Obama's Take on Technology and Innovation in the FY 2015 Budget

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At the center of the President Obama's proposed budget is a \$56 billion "Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative," which will span multiple agencies to "help restore our global edge in basic research, provide funding to support preschool across the United States, and train teachers to take advantage of broadband technology in the classroom." The training and support of teachers comes on the heels of the administration's push for classroom broadband via the ConnectED program. A combination of \$200 million from the general budget and another \$300 million from the new opportunity initiative will help to train more than 100,000 teachers in 500 school districts and provide them with digital resources.

A number of agencies involved in technology policy have been marked for increased allowances in this new budget:

- An additional \$7.5 million has been set aside for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to begin the Internet Policy Center, which will coordinate broadband policy across agency lines.
- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) laboratories will be given \$680 million to push advances in cybersecurity, advanced communications, and disaster resilience, just to name a few.
- Also of note, the Federal Communications Commission has been given an added \$20 million to make possible reforms in the Universal Service Fund program, make information technology upgrades, and provide program support for the 2015 incentive spectrum auctions.

Importantly, the administration has [once again](#) called for a fee on companies that use wireless spectrum. While the budget claims just under \$5 billion could be recovered over the next decade, lawmakers have been far from enthusiastic in levying fees on an important input to the digital economy. Moreover, the suggestion for spectrum fees continue even as the budget has factored an additional \$20 billion via spectrum auctions over next ten years to offset deficits.