

Press Release



ICYMI: Publicly Funded National Labs Are Important to U.S. Innovation

PATRICK HEFFLINGER | FEBRUARY 15, 2018

This week the American Action Forum released research examining the importance of the Department of Energy's publicly funded National Laboratories to innovation in the United States. The research finds that while the Labs spend nearly twice as much as other research and development efforts to produce its 700 patents per year, the Labs' patents are licensed by the private sector at a rate almost four times better than other R&D funding. While there is some debate about proper funding levels, the research determines that the Labs' work cannot be easily replaced by the private sector or alternative innovation investments. It also finds that there are issues that need to be addressed to fully utilize these valuable national assets. See excerpt below:

“...evidence suggests that the National Labs are doing economically valuable work that is not easily replaced by the private sector or alternative innovation investments. Scrutiny of the Labs' performance would likely be better placed on the managerial relationship between the DOE and the Labs, rather than focused on the absolute funding levels. Government reports highlight that the stringent regulatory approach of the DOE has inhibited the Labs' productivity. Further, the guidance documents that remain in effect indicate that research efforts are being unduly focused on fulfilling political objectives of an administration no longer in power, rather than on broader policy goals.”

[Click here](#) to read the full research.

Please see the *Daily Caller's* article on AAF's research [here](#).