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Ronald Reagan Institute Publishes Second Annual National Security Innovation Base Report Card

NSIB Report Card measures critical factors across the innovation ecosystem, makes policy recommendations for improvement

WASHINGTON, DC – The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute’s Center for Peace Through Strength today published its second annual National Security Innovation Base (NSIB) Report Card, an innovative policy tool to measure the effectiveness and resilience of our nation’s innovation ecosystem and provide recommendations for improvement.

“Maintaining America’s edge over our pacing competitor, the People’s Republic of China, depends on our ability to integrate new technologies into our national security ecosystem,” said Roger Zakheim, Director of the Reagan Institute. “While the American private sector still leads in global innovation, and the U.S. government has made some progress over the last year, we are at an inflection point when it comes to translating innovation priorities into capabilities. The defense budget — both the top line dictated by the Fiscal Responsibility Act and its allocation within the President’s budget request — is stifling the health of the NSIB.”

The Reagan Institute brought together innovators, former policymakers, national security experts, and industry leaders to produce the report card, which assesses and grades the national security innovation ecosystem across ten key indicators. Detailed assessments of each indicator can be found in the full report card at www.reaganfoundation.org/nsib.

Defense Modernization	D	Private Sector Innovator Base	B
Innovation Leadership	A-	Public/Civil Innovation Base	C+
Pull-Through for Broader National Priorities	B	Government Alignment	C+
Customer Clarity	D	International Alliances and Partnerships	C
Innovation Capital	B	Talent Base	D

The Reagan Institute also included [six signature recommendations](#), crafted to improve the NSIB ecosystem. Key recommendations include:

- The Department of Defense (DOD) and Congress must fully fund Replicator in FY25 and provide sustained and predictable funding across the FYDP.
- The DOD should establish a pilot program for shared access to commercial classified infrastructure to alleviate the significant facility security burden and limitations placed on NSIB actors, accelerate technology development, and increase competition across the defense industrial base.
- Congress and the DOD must prioritize the development and maturation of novel manufacturing processes that enable the flexible and affordable production of munitions and other military capabilities to meet global demand, strengthen domestic supply chains, and develop the workforce of the future.
- Congress should establish a National Security Innovation Base Green Card Recapture Program to grow the STEM workforce.
- Congress should authorize a Civic Duty Leave program, similar to the National Guard and Reserves, that provides employment protections for individuals to take a sabbatical from an organization to serve in government and then return to their prior employment without suffering any significant professional or financial harm.
- The Department of Defense must reform its approach to commercial intellectual property rights, especially for software.

Reagan Institute Policy Director Rachel Hoff discussed the report card in a panel with other defense innovation experts moderated by Breaking Defense's Valerie Insinna. Watch the panel discussion [here](#).

The report card will guide the conversations at the Reagan Institute's second annual National Security Innovation Base Summit on March 20, 2024 in Washington, D.C. Reporters wishing to cover the summit in person should RSVP [here](#). Those wishing to participate virtually can access the livestream [here](#).

About the Reagan Foundation and Institute:

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute (RRPFI) is the sole nonprofit organization created by President Reagan charged with continuing his legacy and advancing his principles – limited government, individual liberty, economic opportunity, freedom and democracy, peace through strength, and national pride. The Foundation is a non-partisan organization which sustains the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Simi Valley, CA, the Reagan Center for Public Affairs, the Presidential Learning Center, The Air Force One Pavilion, the award-winning Reagan Leadership Academy, and the Reagan Institute, which carries out the Foundation's mission in Washington, D.C. The Reagan Library houses over 55 million pages of Gubernatorial, Presidential and personal papers and over 60,000 gifts and artifacts chronicling the lives of Ronald and Nancy Reagan. It also serves as the final resting place of America's 40th President and his First Lady. More information is available at www.reaganfoundation.org.