

*Senate legislation addresses global helium shortage by ensuring continued access to Federal Helium Reserve*

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA), representing U.S. leadership in semiconductor manufacturing and design, today commended members of the U.S. Senate for approving bipartisan legislation to secure the supply of helium, a gas that is essential for semiconductor manufacturing and other types of advanced manufacturing, as well as scientific research. The Senate today passed the Senate substitute amendment, the High Technology Jobs Preservation Act, to H.R. 527, the Responsible Helium Administration and Stewardship Act, by a vote of 97-2. The House of Representatives [approved](#) H.R. 527 nearly unanimously in April.

"Senate passage of this legislation represents important progress toward addressing the looming global helium shortage, which threatens to harm many industrial and scientific users of helium and undermine critical manufacturing, health care, and research operations across the U.S.," said Brian Toohey, president and CEO, Semiconductor Industry Association. "SIA commends Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman

Ron Wyden

(D-Ore.) and Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska

) for their leadership in advancing this legislation in the Senate, we applaud the Senate for passing the bill with broad bipartisan support, and we urge congressional leaders to reconcile the House and Senate versions of the bill and get compromise legislation to the President for his signature in short order."

Helium is a critical gas used in the advanced manufacturing process for a number of products, including semiconductors. It also has vital applications for scientific research and numerous other products and technologies, including medical devices like MRI machines, chemicals, aerospace, and fiber optics.

The Federal Helium Reserve – established in the 1920s and operated by the federal government ever since – contains about one-third of the world's helium supply and roughly 40 percent of the U.S. supply. Under current law, on Oct. 7 the Reserve will no longer be allowed to sell helium to companies and scientists that depend on it.

The bills passed by the Senate and House both would ensure a reliable supply of helium by allowing the Reserve to continue selling helium to private entities. Doing so would strengthen advanced manufacturing, enable continued scientific research and provide hundreds of millions of dollars in sales revenue to the federal government, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).

"The sectors that rely on helium spur innovation, boost economic growth, and employ millions of people," said Ajit Manocha, Chairman of the SIA Board of Directors. "By enacting legislation to secure the supply of helium, Congress can also help secure America's economic strength and global technology leadership."

### **About the SIA**

*The Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) is the voice of the U.S. semiconductor industry, one of America's top export industries and a key driver of America's economic strength, national security and global competitiveness. Semiconductors – microchips that control all modern electronics – enable the systems and products that we use to work, communicate, travel, entertain, harness energy, treat illness, and make new scientific discoveries. The semiconductor industry directly employs nearly a quarter of a million people in the U.S. In 2012, U.S. semiconductor sales totaled more than \$146 billion, and semiconductors make the global trillion dollar electronics industry possible. Founded in 1977 by five microelectronics pioneers, SIA unites companies that account for 80 percent of America's semiconductor production. Through this coalition, SIA seeks to strengthen U.S. leadership of semiconductor design and manufacturing by working with Congress, the Administration and other key industry stakeholders to encourage policies and regulations that fuel innovation, propel business and drive international competition. Learn more at [www.semiconductors.org](http://www.semiconductors.org)*

## Semiconductor Industry Commends Senate Passage of Legislation to Secure Helium Supply

Written by Australian Business

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