

## STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO NRC REPORT

(February 13, 2009)

On December 10, 2008, Federal agencies participating in the National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI) received a highly-anticipated National Research Council (NRC) early release review of the NNI interagency *Strategy for Nanotechnology-Related Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) Research* (published in February 2008). NNI member agencies noted the report's substantial and important recommendations for further progress on EHS research. They also look forward to working with the NRC on achieving the vital and shared goals of clearly, proactively assessing the potential benefits and risks that may be associated with specific nanomaterials in specific applications.

However, we do not believe that the NRC evaluation recognized the breadth and depth of the NNI commitment to EHS research. The NRC analysis places inordinate emphasis on one document, the February 2008 *Strategy for Nanotechnology-related Environmental, Health, and Safety Research*, which it evaluated as an implementation plan rather than the broad-based strategy for real-world interagency coordination it by definition represents. Furthermore, the report drew a number of conclusions with which the NNI member agencies respectfully disagree. These are detailed in the [NNCO response letter](#) available on <http://www.nano.gov>.

Since it began, the NNI has promoted research to study the potential EHS impacts of nanotechnology. In FY 2008, NNI participating agencies invested at least \$58.6 million in nanotechnology-related EHS research. Investments in this area have grown far more quickly than overall NNI basic research, nearly doubling since 2005. Nonetheless, the NNI agencies are committed to working with all stakeholders to developing a clear implementation plan to address the knowledge gaps identified in the research strategy and to regularly reassess the state of the science through an adaptive management approach. These efforts will continue through the strong interagency coordination that has been the hallmark of the NNI from its inception. The NNI will continue to work with the Academies, Congress, and other stakeholders to strategically increase support of broad-based and targeted nanotechnology-related EHS research to ensure the responsible development of nanotechnology for the broadest societal and economic benefit.

###

*The National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI) is the program established in fiscal year 2001 to coordinate Federal nanotechnology research and development. The NNI provides a vision of the long-term opportunities and benefits of nanotechnology. By serving as a central locus for communication, cooperation, and collaboration for all Federal agencies that wish to participate, the NNI brings together the expertise needed to guide and support the advancement of this broad and complex field.*