

January 6, 1944.

Dear Dr. Dunn:

It has been apparent for some time that the post-war period may bring new and far-reaching developments in the application of standards to commerce. It is a matter of deep concern to the Department of Commerce that the work of the National Bureau of Standards shall be organized to serve the public effectively as new conditions develop after the war.

With this object in view I requested Mr. Carroll L. Wilson to explore the outlook for standards in commerce, and to make recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the NBS and the Department of Commerce in this field. Mr. Wilson's report is enclosed. You will notice that the report concludes that there will be important opportunities for standards development, and that this will extend to new fields, particularly to the development of performance standards for goods sold to the ultimate consumer. It concludes further that effective service will require extensive changes in the approaches hitherto followed by the NBS and by private organizations.

I am hopeful that the report may be made to serve as a basis on which the needed changes can be built. However, from conversations with Dr. Briggs, Mr. Wilson and others, I am convinced that the future of the National Bureau of Standards is intimately bound up with a careful and objective review of the situation.

I am therefore asking the Visiting Committee if it will undertake to advise the Department of Commerce on appropriate steps which it might undertake in the promotion and development of standards in commerce. I am sure that the Visiting Committee will find the Wilson recommendations useful as a starting point. Mr. Wilson has suggested that it might be well to call on a number of leaders in the standards movement to consider how such a program could be got under way. Dr. Briggs and his staff, and also Mr. Wilson, will be very glad to suggest names of persons who might contribute to the discussion, and to assist in the undertaking.

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I am enclosing a half dozen copies of the report,
in the hope that you will transmit them to the members
of your Committee.

Sincerely yours,

WAYNE C. TAYLOR

Wayne C. Taylor,
Acting Secretary of Commerce.

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