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Dr. Dennis L. Polla joined DARPA in 2004 as a Program Manager in the Microsystems Technology Office (MTO). He received B.S. degrees in electrical engineering and physics, the M.S. degree in electrical engineering, and the electrical engineering E.E. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge. He received the Ph.D. degree in electrical engineering and the M.B.A. degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

He has held faculty positions at the University of California - Berkeley, Yale University, and the University of Minnesota where he is presently on leave. Since joining Minnesota in 1987 he has held joint academic appointments in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, and Department of Biomedical Engineering as the Earl E. Bakken Endowed Chair. He has held a variety of administrative positions, including Director of the Microtechnology Laboratory, Director of the Biomedical Engineering Institute, and founding Head of the Department of Biomedical Engineering. His current research interests are in nanobiotechnology, nanostructures, and MEMS.

Dr. Polla is a former Presidential Young Investigator and a recipient of the W. M. Keck Outstanding Engineering Educator Award. Dr. Polla served as President and CEO of SurroMed Pte Ltd, Singapore; Director of the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology - Nanotechnology Laboratory, Singapore; and Faculty Scholar at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

He has served in several national security advisory roles for the Defense Science Board, DARPA, U.S. Navy CNO, Naval War College, U.S. Air Force Scientific Advisory Board, and U.S. Department of Energy.