

JOINT STATEMENT ON SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION RESEARCH

Dear Representative,

The undersigned leaders of Innovation and Entrepreneurs support groups wish to add our voices to the national call for reauthorizing the Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer Program (STTR). We also believe that these programs should become a permanent part of the government's technology investment portfolio for innovative and entrepreneurial small businesses that are and will continue to be the primary engine for economic job growth in the United States.

Our organizations include major national innovation and entrepreneur support groups from throughout the nation. We represent venture and angel capital communities, incubators, university technology transfer offices and professionals, manufacturers, university research parks, innovation and technology based economic development organizations, and professional technical societies.

The National Research Council of the National Academies recent assessment of the SBIR program, chaired by former Department of Defense Undersecretary and University of Maryland Professor Jacques Gansler, concluded:

The SBIR program is proving effective in meeting Congressional objectives. It is increasing innovation, encouraging participation by small companies in federal R&D, providing support for small firms owned by minorities and women, and resolving research questions for mission agencies in a cost-effective manner. The SBIR programs at each of the agencies are, by and large, operated in a fair and open manner. Although there is no single simple metric for determining commercial success, the data heavily support the view that the program has a strong commercial focus and the program is successful in commercializing innovative technologies in a variety of ways.

The economic downturn has rocked the nation's financial underpinnings, and threatens the financial health of many innovative and entrepreneurial small businesses. The SBIR program is an important small business investment and job creation program that helps address the early stage funding gap referred to as the "Valley of Death" by providing funding support at critical stages during the growth of emerging companies.

We thank you for your support in keeping America's Innovation Leadership a priority.

Sincerely yours,

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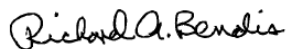
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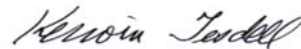
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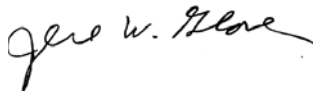
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