

Chairman Norm Dicks' Remarks to the Small Business Technology Council on Receiving the Milton Stewart Award

2010 Milton Stewart Awards
Armed Services Committee Hearing Room
Washington, DC
September 29, 2010

Throughout my career I have been convinced that small businesses are where much of the real innovation takes place ... and they are obviously where most of the new jobs are created today, in basements and garages and spare bedrooms...where the entrepreneurial spirit often thrives and as people launch their a business to pursue their own great ideas and be their own boss.

And as longtime member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, and now as Chairman, I am obviously concerned about the ability of small and medium sized companies to approach the Defense Department with innovative solutions. I know that businesses often struggle to navigate the complex federal acquisition process in all the agencies.

This year I have tried to expand the capabilities of the Defense Department by creating incentives that build upon the opportunities that already exist at the Pentagon through the SBIR program.

In the bin that my subcommittee approved in late July, we included more than \$662 million to fund innovative research and procurement items to enhance military capabilities, reduce the cost of weapons systems and enhance the quality of Ufe for military personnel:

- ~ \$504 million ABOVE the Administration's request for the Innovative Research Fund within Title 4-RDT&E.
- ~ \$100 million ABOVE the request in Title 3Procurement for the Innovative Procurement Fund.
- ~ \$58.6 million in Title 9-for Rapid Equipping Soldier Support Equipment.

Our Subcommittee is also concerned about SBIR Phase 3, which is designed to transition maturing technologies into major defense acquisition programs and the commercial sector. I regret that the history of technologies making the leap into a fully supported program isn't what it should be, and we were encouraged by the Defense Authorization bill's initiative to rectify that situation through the Rapid Innovation Fund. We've got to find a way to bring these ideas to completion, and in the years ahead we simply must bridge this gap.

So I appreciate what you are doing to recognize the advocates for small business in the House of Representatives, and thank you for what you do as an organization to help small businesses to compete better in the federal marketplace.

-Norm Dicks
Chairman
Defense Appropriations Subcommittee