



March 7, 2011

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Landrieu and Ranking Member Snowe:

The National Small Business Association is pleased to support the *SBIR/STTR Reauthorization Act of 2011 (S. 493)*. Reaching 150,000 small-business owners across the nation, NSBA is the country's oldest small-business advocacy organization and a longtime supporter of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program.

As you both know, the SBIR program is the nation's largest source of early-stage research and development funding. Providing more than 50,000 patents since its inception, SBIR has successfully harnessed the proven innovative power of small, technology-based businesses to meet the nation's technology needs. On average, SBIR generates seven new patents per day—which is far more than all U.S. universities combined, at less than one-twelfth their level of federal research and development funding.

Unfortunately, the reauthorization of this demonstrably-effective program has been beset by various tribulations. This has led to ten short-term reauthorizations since 2008. These repeated, temporary extensions have wreaked havoc on agencies' ability to make strategic decisions in regard to the programs. The uncertain future of the program also has deterred potential participants and investors.

Thankfully, a compromise reauthorization package—which allows for increased venture-capital participation but retains the small-business integrity of the program—has been forged. This compromise has been endorsed by the Biotechnology Industry Organization, the National Venture Capital Association, and the Small Business Technology Council, the nation's largest tech-oriented small business organization from diverse industries.

NSBA also fully supports *S. 493* and urges its swift adoption. NSBA thanks you both for your unflagging and indispensable efforts to protect the small-business focus of the SBIR and STTR programs and achieve this balanced and fair compromise reauthorization package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd McCracken", written in a cursive style.

Todd O. McCracken
President