

September 22, 2025

The Honorable Joni Ernst
Chair
Committee on Small Business &
Entrepreneurship
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
Ranking Member
Committee on Small Business &
Entrepreneurship
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Ernst and Ranking Member Markey,

We write as members of the National Academies' congressionally mandated studies of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. To date, we have completed reviews of the SBIR/STTR programs at the Department of Energy, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation. Our consensus report on the Department of Defense program is currently under review and we are now examining the programs at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Across all agencies, our findings are consistent: the SBIR and STTR programs play a vital role in delivering cutting-edge technologies, advancing sustainable energy solutions, developing lifesaving medical therapies, and meeting diverse federal mission needs. Yet these proven programs face the risk of expiring on October 1, 2025—jeopardizing a pipeline of innovation that has served the nation for more than 40 years, since their creation by Congress and enactment into law by President Ronald Reagan.

To protect this essential engine of innovation, we urge swift passage of H.R. 5100, bipartisan legislation approved by the House of Representatives on September 15. This bill would extend SBIR and STTR for one year, ensuring continuity for thousands of small businesses while giving Congress the necessary time to develop a longer-term framework.

This is no time to risk America's innovation advantage. Allowing the programs to lapse would undermine small businesses, weaken our industrial base, and erode U.S. leadership in technology commercialization. Any significant changes to the programs' structure deserve careful, deliberate consideration. By passing a one-year extension, the Senate can safeguard SBIR and STTR today while laying the groundwork for a robust, long-term reauthorization that strengthens them for decades to come.

Thank you for your continued leadership in supporting America's small businesses and the indispensable role they play in driving innovation and fostering economic growth in communities across the country.

Respectfully,

Maryann Feldman, Co-Chair Arizona State University	Scott Stern, Co-Chair Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Michael Andrews University of Maryland Baltimore County	Ellen Lord Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab
Janet Bercovitz University of Colorado Boulder	Matt Marx Cornell University

M. Diane Burton Cornell University	Emily Pahnke University of Washington
Ramalingam Chellappa Johns Hopkins University	Arun Seraphin NDIA Emerging Technologies Institute
Donna K. Ginther University of Kansas	Stephanie S. Shipp Iowa State University
Jorge Guzman Columbia University	Timothy S. Simcoe Boston University
Yael Hochberg Rice University	Clay B. Thorp Hatteras Venture Partners
Amalia R. Miller University of Virginia	Angelino Viceisza Spelman College
Riitta Katila Stanford University	Joshua Graff Zivin University of California, San Diego.
Lauren Elizabeth Lanahan University of Oregon	Dashun Wang Northwestern University
Alicia Löffler Northwestern University	Rosemarie Ziedonis Boston University

cc: Members, Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship
 Senator John Thune, Senate Majority Leader
 Senator Charles Schumer, Senate Minority Leader