May 9, 2022

Dear COMPETES/USICA Conference Committee Members,

The undersigned organizations urge you to pass an extension of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs as part of reconciliation of the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) and the America COMPETES Act (COMPETES).

We represent small businesses, state medical technology and biotechnology groups, academic and research institutions, and related organizations across the United States and act at the common voice for innovative companies and entrepreneurs producing medical devices, biopharmaceuticals, diagnostic products, and digital health technologies. Our companies are at the center of Congress' goal to strengthen American competitiveness and SBIR/STTR is a critical component to ensure the United States remains the leader in health advancement.

Many of these small businesses rely on SBIR/STTR funding to advance and de-risk innovative health care solutions. Federal R&D funding also provides a basis for scientific and technical validation, which attracts private investment and supports small businesses developing new therapies for patients.

The SBIR/STTR Programs are currently set to expire on September 30, 2022. It would be damaging to American innovation and competitiveness if these programs were to expire before a full reauthorization can be passed. The SBIR/STTR Programs enable small businesses to develop and commercialize new innovative technologies and have a proven track record of promoting competition through a merit-based application process. Since their establishment in 1982, these programs have provided over 179,000 awards, totaling more than $54.3 billion, to U.S. small businesses. A study by the National Academy of Sciences found a commercialization rate of 50-60% for SBIR/STTR investments.

SBIR/STTR are an essential part of America's innovative high-tech ecosystem, and even the threat of a short-term disruption of these programs could have a severe effect on R&D-focused small businesses. Federal agencies could also see their research and technology development stalled by a disruption in these programs, which are already built into agency budgets. Both small businesses and the agencies need certainty, stability, and predictability to budget and plan—especially as the nation works to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, we respectfully request that an extension of the SBIR/STTR programs, including related pilot authorities, be included in the USICA and the COMPETES Acts. We think it is a necessary component to strengthen the entire innovation ecosystem. This extension will give Congress the time it needs to develop and pass a comprehensive reauthorization bill for SBIR and STTR, one that includes needed changes and improvements. It will also give both small businesses and federal agencies certainty that these vital programs will not expire or be disrupted.

Sincerely,

The Advanced Medical Technology Association (AdvaMed)

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)

Bio Alabama

AZBio

Biocom California

California Life Sciences

Colorado BioScience Association

BioCT

Delaware BioScience Association

Florida Medical Manufacturer's Consortium

Georgia Bio/Center for Global Health Innovation (CGHI)

Illinois Biotechnology Innovation Organization (iBIO)

Indiana Health Industry Forum

Industry University Research Center, Inc. – INDUNIV

BioKansas

Kentucky Life Sciences Council (KLSC)

Louisiana BIO

Maryland Tech Council

MassBIO

MassMEDIC

MichBio

Medical Alley Association (Minnesota)

Minnesota Technology Association

Montana BioScience Alliance

MOBIO

Bio Nebraska

BioNJ

Healthcare Institute of New Jersey (HINJ)

New Mexico Biotechnology & Biomedical Association

New York Bio

North Carolina Biosciences Organization (NCBIO)

BioOhio

OKBio

Oregon Bioscience Association

Life Science PA

SBIR Consortium

SCBIO

South Dakota Biotech

Life Science Tennessee

Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute

BioUtah

Life Science Washington

Bioscience Association of West Virginia

BioForward Wisconsin