



THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3030 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3030

RESEARCH
AND ENGINEERING

The Honorable Nydia M. Velazquez
Chairwoman
Committee on Small Business
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

We highly encourage Congress to reauthorize the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs as soon as possible. As Secretary Austin said at the Reagan National Defense Forum in December, the Department of Defense (DoD) is “doubling down” on the SBIR and STTR programs, which fuel American firms to pursue research and development tailored to the Department’s unique technology requirements. The SBIR/STTR programs play a vital role in enabling the U.S. to maintain technological dominance and provide the innovation to allow the U.S. to remain ahead of our adversaries.

We are concerned about the uncertainty of reauthorization of the SBIR/STTR programs and the impact of a lapse on both the Department and small businesses. Failure to reauthorize the programs will result in approximately 1,200 warfighter needs not being addressed through innovative research and technology development. In addition, any lapse could result in thousands of small businesses being forced to lay off workers, or drive them to other sources of funding, to include foreign investment.

Our offices have been working to strengthen our partnerships with small businesses by streamlining the SBIR/STTR programs to make it easier for small businesses to work with the DoD and by fortifying security controls to ensure that SBIR/STTR-funded technology is not transferred to adversary nations. Without a program targeted towards small businesses, the Department will potentially lose access to the talent and innovation inherent in America’s small businesses. In addition, uncertainty in the program will discourage small companies from doing business with DoD in the future.

DoD is the largest funder of SBIR/STTR research across the Federal Government and reaps tremendous benefits by tapping into the innovation of America’s small businesses. Without the SBIR/STTR programs, the DoD will lose access to the innovative technology solutions that increase the readiness, modernization, and lethality of our warfighters. Please preserve the merit-based foundation of the SBIR/STTR programs and reauthorize them as soon as possible.

We are sending identical letters to the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee; the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee; the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee; and the House and Senate Committees on Armed Services.

Sincerely,

William A. LaPlante

Sincerely,

Heidi Shyu

cc:

The Honorable Blaine Luetkemeyer
Ranking Member