

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 13, 2001

Mr. John Whitmore  
Acting Administrator  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
409 Third Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Mr. Whitmore:

On May 18, 2001, the Small Business Administration (SBA) published proposed revisions to the policy directive governing the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program in the Federal Register. The comment period for this proposed policy directive is scheduled to expire on June 18, 2001. We urge the SBA to extend the comment period at least 30 days so that this proposal can receive adequate review and consideration by the affected parties.

We have heard from many individuals involved with the SBIR and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program that it will be very difficult for many small high-technology businesses adequately to prepare comments on the proposed policy directive within the time frame the SBA established. The businesses primarily affected by this directive are the small businesses that have received awards under the SBIR or STTR programs and are located throughout the country. These businesses do not read the Federal Register on a consistent basis and are not accustomed to drafting comments on proposed changes to Federal policy. Unlike large businesses, these small firms generally do not have individual representation in Washington, D.C. to assist them in analyzing and preparing comments on the directive.

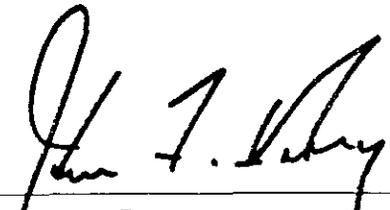
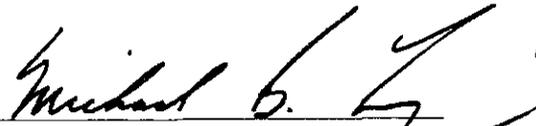
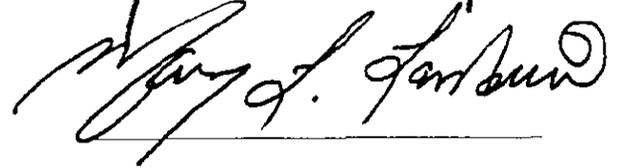
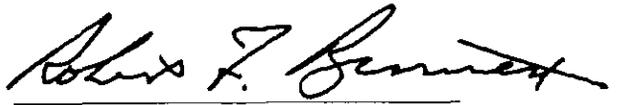
Moreover, the proposed policy directive is voluminous. Because of its length and because it does not highlight the changes from previous policy directives, it is difficult for businesses to determine the effect the proposed directive will have on their activities and the SBIR and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program.

To ensure that the SBA receives sufficient comments from the affected parties of this proposed directive and properly understands the impact of its proposal on high-technology small businesses and the SBIR and STTR programs, generally, we request that the agency extend the comment period for at least 30 days.

Mr. John Whitmore  
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If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact David Bohley, Counsel for the Republican Staff, at 224- or Jere Glover, Counsel for the Majority Staff, at 224- .  
Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

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