

[Previously sent prior to the expiration on Sep. 30: [Senate version](#), [House version](#). The text below includes minor changes reflecting the latest status now that the programs expired. It will be updated with new signatures and resent shortly as Congressional leaders continue to negotiate the future of SBIR/STTR programs.]

Senator Joni Ernst  
Chair  
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business  
and Entrepreneurship  
260 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20002

Senator Ed Markey  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business  
and Entrepreneurship  
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20002

[Nov. XX, 2025]

Dear Chair Ernst and Ranking Member Markey:

On behalf of the undersigned businesses and organizations, we urge Congress to swiftly extend the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, which lapsed on October 1. A one-year extension (H.R. 5100) unanimously passed the House but then stalled in the Senate due to an impasse in negotiations among Small Business Committee leaders over repeat award winners and foreign influence.

For more than four decades, SBIR and STTR have been among the most effective federal programs for driving innovation, strengthening U.S. competitiveness, and fostering high-quality job creation. These programs fund breakthrough technologies developed by small businesses across every state, serving the mission needs of federal agencies while catalyzing private-sector growth. The current lapse is already undermining research pipelines, disrupting partnerships, and sending a message of uncertainty to the very companies driving U.S. innovation.

We recognize that important negotiations are ongoing between Democratic and Republican members of Congress over how best to reauthorize these programs. A short-term extension would have provided the time needed for continued bipartisan negotiations while avoiding a damaging interruption. At this stage, it is essential that lawmakers swiftly come to a compromise agreement and pass a reauthorization bill. Below are our recommendations, but our top priority is restarting the programs as quickly as possible.

**We support provisions that:**

- Provide long-term certainty for the programs, ideally permanent reauthorization, so small businesses can plan with confidence.
- Ensure sufficient allocation levels that reflect the programs' proven return on taxpayer investment.
- Improve commercialization pathways, such as strengthening and expanding Phase III opportunities and agency support to help bridge the "valley of death."
- Support efforts to strengthen recruitment and support of new applicants and simplify application processes.
- Prevent agencies from placing unreasonable limits on indirect cost rates.

**At the same time, we urge caution in adopting any provisions that would undermine participation in SBIR/STTR, such as:**

- Narrowing eligibility in ways that exclude capable and innovative small businesses.
- Imposing duplicative or overly burdensome compliance, audit, or reporting mandates.
- Creating unnecessary hurdles for venture-backed or other qualified small businesses that have proven track records of innovation.
- Adding administrative requirements that increase red tape without improving accountability or outcomes.

In short, we urge Congress to act without delay to reauthorize the SBIR/STTR programs and continue to advance critical support for America's innovation ecosystem.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your longstanding bipartisan support of America's small business innovators.

Sincerely,

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