



May 24, 2022

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Chairwoman
House Science, Space & Technology Committee
2321 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Ranking Member
House Science, Space & Technology Committee
2321 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Johnson and Ranking Member Lucas:

AUTM – an association representing thousands of those who work in university technology transfer offices and related fields – wishes to thank you for your diligence in helping pass the America Competes Act earlier this year. This landmark legislation has great potential to help keep our nation as the world’s leading innovator.

As you meet in conference with the Senate to negotiate a final version, we urge you to include language from Section 2109 of the U.S. Innovation and Competitiveness Act, which the Senate passed last fall.

Those provisions in the Senate bill will do two important things:

1. Authorize new funding to directly aid the ability of university technology transfer offices to provide important services to drive the commercialization of discoveries. This is of particular interest to medium and smaller universities, and especially to HBCUs and other MSIs. The language also will allow the offset of patent and licensing expenses. The ability of these offices to build capacity and better train their employees will lead to greater amounts of their research being commercialized for the benefit of all of us.
2. Create regional collaborative innovation centers that will provide enhanced access to facilities, training and other assistance for entrepreneurs and startups that will increase their ability to be successful innovators. Investment in these companies and innovators will pay back dividends for years to come.

Technology transfer has yielded huge benefits to our nation since the passage in 1980 of the Bayh-Dole Act. Trillions of dollars of economic impact – hundreds of new medicines – thousands of patents – and millions of jobs have resulted. But as we strive to remain competitive with China and other world economies, unleashing the full potential of America’s universities – especially its medium and smaller ones – is vital for keeping our nation out in front.

We urge you and your fellow House conferees to support inclusion of the USICA provisions on technology transfer as you negotiate the final compromise bill. Thank you for considering our perspective.

Sincerely,

Stephen J Susalka, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

