



Association of  
American Medical Colleges  
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**Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

April 17, 2008

Dear Representative:

As President of the AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges), I write to express our strong opposition to a provision in the “Science and Technology Innovation Act of 2008” (H.R. 5789) that would increase the levies imposed on most federal science agencies to fund the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer Research (STTR) programs. The AAMC is a not-for-profit association representing all 129 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, including 68 Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and 94 academic and scientific societies.

The AAMC is strongly opposed to H.R. 5789’s proposed increase in the SBIR set-aside from 2.5 percent to 3 percent of any federal agency budget that provides more than \$100 million for research. Increasing the SBIR set-aside at a time when congressional appropriations for agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation have stagnated for the past several years will result in funding cuts for these agencies, further hampering the nation’s efforts to sustain innovation in the biomedical and physical sciences . Further, we question whether there is enough small business research—and of sufficient quality—to merit SBIR funding that would come at the expense of peer-reviewed basic and applied research.

We note that the Small Business Administration opposes increasing the set-aside for the SBIR program, citing both the lack of an empirical basis for such an increase and the effective reduction in funding available for agencies’ core research programs.

We understand that the House will soon consider H.R. 5789. We hope to work with you to address the issue of the SBIR set-aside as H.R. 5789 moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darrell G. Kirch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.