



Dear Chair Ernst and Ranking Member Markey,

On behalf of the Technology Association of Iowa (TAI) and our statewide membership of technology leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators, we express our strong support for the INNOVATE Act, a critical step toward modernizing and improving the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs.

Iowa's tech-driven small businesses play an essential role in advancing innovation, creating high-quality jobs, and driving economic growth across the state. However, many of these companies face significant barriers when seeking federal funding for research and development. Current SBIR-STTR application processes are complex and time-consuming, limiting participation from new and emerging startups that lack the resources to navigate the challenging process. The INNOVATE Act directly addresses these challenges by introducing a streamlined Phase 1A application process, making it easier for first-time applicants to access funding and contribute to the nation's technological advancement.

Additionally, the bill takes necessary steps to restore the program's original intent — supporting early-stage innovation and commercialization rather than allowing a small number of repeat recipients to dominate funding opportunities. By placing reasonable limits on lifetime Phase I and Phase II awards and ensuring companies meet strong commercialization standards, the INNOVATE Act fosters true competition and ensures SBIR-STTR investments drive real-world impact.

At TAI, we advocate for policies that strengthen Iowa's innovation ecosystem, empower small businesses, and position our state as a leader in technology development. The INNOVATE Act represents a forward-thinking approach that will expand access to funding, promote fair competition, and accelerate the commercialization of groundbreaking technologies.

We support this effort and encourage its passage to ensure that Iowa's entrepreneurs —and small businesses across the country—have the resources needed to succeed in today's competitive tech landscape.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brian Waller'.

Brian Waller
President
Technology Association of Iowa