

Opening Statement
The Honorable Adrian Smith

Committee on Science and Technology

Markup of H.R. 2965, the Enhancing Small Business Research and Innovation Act of 2009

June 24, 2009

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to support passage of this legislation, the Enhancing Small Business Research and Innovation Act of 2009.

With 11 participating agencies and total funding in excess of \$2.2 billion, the SBIR and STTR programs reauthorized in this legislation are a key component of the Federal R&D portfolio, serving to facilitate increased private sector commercialization of promising ideas helping the government advance its R&D goals and meet its technology needs.

This legislation makes important improvements to this program, most notably by providing statutory clarity to what have been changing interpretations of the eligibility of majority venture capital-backed small businesses. As we know, both this committee and the Small Business Committee have considered this issue in detail in recent years, and I think the growing consensus in support of the legislation's proposed changes is a strong indication that they are on target—maximizing the eligibility of legitimate small businesses while minimizing the inappropriate eligibility of large businesses.

I also want to note my strong support for Title III of this bill, which includes amendment language that I included in this legislation last year. The language requires the Small Business Administration's outreach efforts -- aimed at increasing participation in SBIR and STTR -- give priority to rural areas, which tend to have low participation in the programs but are nonetheless home to entrepreneurial and innovative small business owners who would benefit from increased outreach.

I thank Chairman Gordon, Ranking Member Hall, and Chairman Wu for their leadership on this legislation and I look forward to working with them to ensure we expedite completion of this bill before these programs expire at the end of July.

I yield back.