AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2763
OFFERED BY MR. LIPINSKI OF ILLINOIS

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 7. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION INNOVATION CORPS PROGRAM.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The National Science Foundation Innovation Corps program (in this section referred to as the “I-Corps program”), created administratively by National Science Foundation in 2011 and statutorily authorized in the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act, has succeeded in increasing the commercialization of government funded research.

(2) I-Corps provides valuable entrepreneurial education to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, providing formal training for scientists and engineers to pursue careers in business, an increasingly common path for advanced degree holders.

(3) The current I-Corps Teams Program is successful in part due to its focus on providing the specific types of support and mentoring entrepreneurs need based on the early stage of their companies,
however this support is not available to entre-
preneurs at later stages.

(4) The I-Corps Program’s success in the early
stages of the innovation continuum should be ex-
panded to offer training to small businesses through-
out all government funded stages of research and
development.

(5) Existing business accelerators and univer-
sity technology transfer programs provide an excel-
lent template for how to train and support early-
and mid-stage companies in achieving growth, scale,
and market entry.

(b) I-Corps Program Training for SBIR and
STTR Participants.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National
Science Foundation (in this section referred to as
the “Director”), in consultation with other Federal
agencies required to carry out SBIR or STTR pro-
grams under section 9 of the Small Business Act, I-
Corps regional nodes, universities, and public and
private entities engaged in technology transfer or
commercialization of technologies, shall develop re-
sources, to include model curriculum, training mate-
rials, and best practices, to support two entrepre-
nurial training programs: one program to provide
training for small business concerns participating in phase I of an SBIR or STTR program (in this section referred to as “I-Corps Phase I”) and one program to provide training for small business concerns participating in phase II of an SBIR or STTR program (in this section referred to as “I-Corps Phase II”).

(2) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE RESOURCES.—The resources described in paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public at no cost on the public Internet website of the National Science Foundation.

(c) I-CORPS TRAINING SITES.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—The Director shall develop and maintain eligibility criteria for programs to become accredited training sites to provide training to small business concerns under the I-Corps Phase I and Phase II programs using the resources, curriculum, materials, and best practices developed under subsection (b)(1). Programs eligible to apply for such accreditation shall include those operated by universities, State and local governments, non-profit organizations, and public-private partnerships.

(2) REQUIREMENT FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES TO PROVIDE TRAINING.—Each Federal agency with an extramural budget for research or research and de-
development in excess of $100,000,000 shall make available to small business concerns participating in the agency’s SBIR and, if applicable, STTR program, training from accredited I-Corps Phase I and Phase II training sites.

(d) DISCRETIONARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall ensure that the I-Corps program is designated as a vendor eligible to provide small business concerns engaged in SBIR or STTR projects with technical assistance services under section 9(q) of the Small Business Act.

(e) REGIONAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.—Each I-Corps regional node shall become an accredited I-Corps Phase I and Phase II training site and serve as a regional center of excellence, continuously improving and maintaining the curriculum over time, and providing support to other organizations seeking to become accredited I-Corps training sites as provided in subsection (c)(1).

(f) GAO EVALUATION.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall commence an evaluation of the I-Corps program at all phases, including Phase 0. Such evaluation shall include—

(1) an assessment of any effect of the I-Corps program on the commercialization of federally funded research and development;
(2) any such effect on the higher education system; and

(3) any such effect on regional economies and the national economy.