



ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

JUN 30 2006

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-2102

Dear Senator Kerry:


Thank you for your letter dated May 15, 2006 regarding the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program and section 252 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006. Specifically, you requested a meeting between your small business committee staff and my staff to address specific questions relative to the requirements of section 252. I am pleased to support that request and suggest that your staff coordinate the meeting with Mr. Frank Ramos, the Director of Small Business Programs. He can be reached at (703) 604-0024.

The Department's strategic plan to shift our balance of capabilities over time to adjust to new challenges place special value on innovation, ingenuity, and efficiency – and American small business can provide just that. Specifically, the SBIR program is well suited to this task. It has long been a source of critical materiel solutions for the war fighter, producing such advancements as Small Arms Protective Insert ceramic plates and handheld speech translation devices used widely in operations in Iraq and around the world.

I share your desire to enhance the degree to which SBIR is a source leading to advanced technology for the war fighter. My goal is to identify and proliferate best practices across the Department to be sure we are investing in the right technologies, and are effectively transitioning them wherever and whenever possible. While it is important that the SBIR program addresses identified technology needs in the near-term, it must also remain a potent source of true innovation to preserve our nation's technological advantage.

I appreciate your interest in and strong support of the SBIR program, and welcome the opportunity to address future concerns. A similar letter has been sent to the other signatories of your letter.

Sincerely,



Kenneth J. Krieg

