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COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SUBCOMMITTEES ON
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

December 8, 2011

The Honorable Steven Chu
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0001

Dear Secretary Chu,

I am writing in support of the President's October 28, 2011 Executive Memorandum on Accelerating Technology Transfer and Commercialization of Federal Research in Support of High-Growth Businesses. As a co-founder and co-chair of the Congressional Technology Transfer Caucus, I believe that technology transfer can provide great benefits to our nation's economic competitiveness and job creation.

The federal government has had the authority to engage in technology transfer activities since the passage of the Stevenson-Wydler and Bayh-Dole Acts in the 1980's. The Science and Technology Policy Institute found in their recent study of the current state of affairs of technology transfer across the federal government that "support from agency leadership and laboratory directors can have a marked effect on technology transfer and commercialization activities."

I urge you to take the opportunity presented by the President's memorandum to take concrete actions to promote technology transfer and commercialization of federal research and development within the Department of Energy. In particular, I recommend the following actions for your consideration:

- Include technology transfer and commercialization metrics as part of each DOE laboratory's yearly performance evaluation plan. This is a very effective mechanism for communicating performance expectations and is explicitly mentioned in the President's memorandum.
- Require that laboratory employee's technology transfer activities be included in their performance and promotion evaluations. This would incentivize and reward employees for prioritizing such activities and, while it is not consistently implemented, has already been required by the Stevenson-Wydler Act.

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- Standardize contracting mechanisms and licensing terms across laboratories so that it is easier for companies to license DOE technologies and to collaborate with DOE scientists and engineers.

I also recommend all the actions listed in Section 4 of the President's memorandum, on facilitating commercialization through local and regional partnerships. Such regional partnerships can multiply the technology transfer and commercialization activities associated with a given laboratory.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope that you will do me the favor of informing me of the actions you do take.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Ray Lujan".

Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress

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