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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

April 24, 1980

Dear Friend:

I thought you would be interested in a recent victory for innovation and productivity. For some time now I have been leading the Senate effort with Senator Dole to accomplish passage of S. 414, The University and Small Business Patent Procedures Act. Yesterday, the Senate overwhelmingly passed S. 414 by a vote of 91-4.

This bill is designed to allow universities, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations to retain ownership of inventions that they make while conducting government-supported research. The bill also protects the rights of the public and the agencies to enjoy the use of inventions that are made under their work. The passage of this bill by such a large majority is evidence that the Senate is aware of the importance of clearing away unnecessary bureaucratic roadblocks to innovation. Too many promising inventions have been allowed to simply gather dust on the shelves of government agencies under the present patent policies.

Passage of S. 414 is the culmination of a 20-year debate on government patent policy. The forceful testimony given by university and private industry representatives to the Senate Judiciary Committee was eloquent testimony to the need for a revision of the present policies which have proven to be so ineffective. The support given to S. 414 by universities and the private sector was crucial to its success.

The House Judiciary Committee is now concluding its hearings on the companion bill to S. 414. It is important that the supporters of the University and Small Business Patent Procedures Act redouble their efforts to alert their Congressmen to the importance of this problem to the American people. I am confident that if this effort is made the House of Representatives will also demonstrate its support of this bill.

Again, thank you for all of your hard work!

Sincerely,

Birch Bayh

Birch Bayh
Unites States Senator