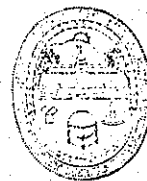


The University of Vermont

OFFICE OF THE DEAN, GRADUATE COLLEGE
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March 22, 1984

Mr. John Podesta
Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear John:

This is a follow-up to our telephone conversation of March 8, 1984 in which we discussed the upcoming hearings on patent legislation (S.2171) to be held by Senator Dole on March 27, 1984. We at the University of Vermont favor the proposed extensions of PL96-517 including:

- Repeal of five year cap on the granting of exclusive license to an industrial concern.
- Management focus in the Department of Commerce rather than OMB.
- Expanded definition of invention to include "any novel variety of plant which is or may be protectable under the Plant Variety Protection Act."
- The opportunity for federal agencies to waive any condition that attach to ownership of university inventions.

In a larger sense, the above extensions suggest that revised legislation can serve as a model for continued national innovation and competitiveness. As you know, the transfer of technology from the universities to the private sector is an extremely complicated yet important activity and sound legislative guidelines will promote not only innovation in our universities and private sector organizations but at the same time make our country extremely competitive in worldwide markets. In the past two years, the University of Vermont has filed four patent applications with subject matters ranging from anti-cancer drugs to bioherbicides with three of these applications involving faculty researchers from different universities. We are now in the process of licensing two of these inventions. Negotiations are complex, time consuming, and costly especially as we move now into the area of moving the technology into the private sector. Accordingly, from our practical experiences in this area we encourage legislation that will simplify and expedite this transfer process as well as allow greater flexibility in negotiations.

As I indicated in an earlier letter to Senator Leahy, I encourage him to consider co-sponsoring the above legislation that may arise from the above referenced hearings.

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I thank you for your consideration and cooperation in the above matters. Please do not hesitate to call upon me if I may be of assistance to Senator Leahy or you regarding this important area of legislation.

My best wishes to you.

Sincerely yours,



Robert B. Lawson, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Research
and Dean of the Graduate College

RBL:kad

cc: Senator Patrick J. Leahy
President Lattie F. Coor