



# Association of American Universities

Office of the President

February 8, 1978

Dr. Richard C. Atkinson  
Director  
National Science Foundation  
1800 G Street, N. W., Room 520  
Washington, D. C. 20550

Dear Dick:

Certain presidents who serve on the AAU Committee on Science and Research met with White House officials recently to discuss alternative federal patent policies. I am attaching a record of that meeting.

Although the Association has not taken a formal position on patent policy, President Sproull reported quite accurately, I think, that higher education unanimously agrees with the objectives of Congressman Thornton's bill, which would vest patent rights with the contractor. When an institution licenses an invention and when that invention reaches the marketplace, royalty revenue is returned to the research effort; but, more importantly, inventions are more likely to be developed for the market if title is retained by the contractor than if it is vested in the government.

I understand that the various federal agencies are giving their views on the Thornton bill to Frank Press. I hope you will consider our point of view when you prepare your position.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Bartlett

TAB/m  
Attachment

bcc (w/attachment)

J. Roschwalb  
H. Bremmer  
M. Goldberg