Ill 27 1979 Inited States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ROOM 5202, DIRKSEN OFFICE BUILDING

Washington, D.C., 7/24, 1979

Referred to Howard W. Bremer

Testimony on **S.** /2/3

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STATEMENTS OF MR. HOWARD W. BREMER, PATENT COUNSEL, 1 mgc WISCONSIN ALUMNI RESEARCH FOUNDATION; AND DR. WILLARD 2 MARCY, VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH CORPORATION. 3 Senator Schmitt. Mr. Bremer, will you proceed first, 4 5 please. Mr. Bremer. Yes. Thank you yery much. Ó 7 I appreciate the opportunity to participate in these hearings and present the views of academia. My remarks ð today are made on behalf of the University of Wisconsin. the 9 American Council on Education which is the largest 10 association of colleges and universities in the nation, the 11 12 Committee on Government Relations of the National Association of College and University Business Officers, and 13 -14 the Society of the University Patent Administrators. 15 16 17 18

I have been engaged in the transfer of technology from the University of Wisconsin for the past 19 years as patent counsel for the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, which foundation functions as the invention and patent administration arm of the University of Wisconsin, and I have drawn upon that experience and the experience of numerous colleagues of mine who have been similarly engaged for these remarks.

I might add at this point that part of that experience also involved an adamant position by the Department of the Interior on the ore processing invention which discouraged

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university and commercial participation.

Fundamental to the position of the university community with regard to the disposition of property rights resulting from research and development activities sponsored and funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government are certain strong beliefs which have been amply reinforced by Among these the experience of many years are the following:

One, that the patent system, imperfect though it may be, is the key to the conversion of scientific knowledge into production benefitting human welfare.

Two, that, as stated by Chief Judge Markey of the CCPA, no institution has done so much for so many with so little public and judicial understanding as has the American patent system.

There, that the basic consideration in the disposition of intellectual property rights should not be whether the government or the contractor should take title to such property when it is generated in whole or in part with Government funding, but, in whose hands will the vestiture of primary rights to invention serve to transfer the inventive technology most quickly to the public for its use and benefit.

Four, that the absence of a uniform government patent policy has been a serious disincentive to successful technology transfer from the university to the public and

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has, in fact, often deprived the public of the fruits of basic research.

Five, that the absence of a uniform government patent policy which reflects and supports our system of free enterprise has helped to put the U.S. at peril in the world economic scene;

Six, that science has over the years been made increasingly subservient to politics, with decisions being made not on scientific facts but on political opportunity.

Seven, that the talent of invention must be given the maximum encouragement by providing the inventor and the process of technology transfer all necessary stimuli to inventive and in novation activity in a free enterprise environment.

Eight, that the less restrictive a government patent policy is, the greater is the transfer of technology under the policy. and

And Nine, that a uniform government patent policy under which the contractor has the first option to acquire title to inventions made in whole or in part with government funds will provide the maximum stimulus to invention and innovation and will be in the public interest.

It appears to us that the goals of S. 1215 and the university community are essentially the same, and, as an instrument toward achieving such goals, the university

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community, as represented by the organizations on behalf of which whom I speak, supports S. 1215.

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At the outset it must be presumed that government research dollars are made available in the expectation of not only developing basic knowledge, but also in the expectation that the funded research will lead to products, processes, and techniques which will be useful and acceptable in all or part of our society to improve the well-being of the society in general.

In the face of this presumption it is apparent that inventions, whether made through the expenditure of private or governmental funds, are of little use to society unless and until they are utilized by society. In order to achieve such utilization it is essential that the invention be placed in a form or condition which will be acceptable and . beneficial to the public..

In a free enterprise system, such transfer is normally accomplished as the result of pertinent and appropriate activities of private enterprise. Such activities obviously entail the commitment and expenditure of substantialy monies -- generally estimated at ten times or more of the amount needed to make the invention. Obviously, adequate and appropriate incentives to such commitment and expanditures must be afforded.

Consequently, and since the patent system provides such

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incentives and is the most viable vehicle for accomplishing the transfer of technology, full and careful consideration must be given to the making of any patent policy which will affect the transfer of technology that has been generated in whole or in part by government funded research.

One can truthfully say that at best the government patent policy has been non-uniform and at worst has been a non-policy with the result that some 20 or more agency policies have developed, and even those have not been necessarily uniformly applied. At the one extreme, some of the agencies advocated the "title" policy. At the other extreme were those agencies advocating the "license" policy. There were also many and varied policies between these two extremes.

Governmental agencies operating under the "title" policy insisted on acquiring title to all contract generated inventions and patents on them, including inventions which were only incidental to the major purpose of the contract, and then dedicated them to the public through publication, or by offering a license on a nonexclusive, royalty-free basis under any patents obtained to all who requested it. The argument was that all these inventions, including the incidental inventions, should be acquired because they had been "paid for" by the government and should therefore be owned by the government.

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Agencies which adopted the "license" policy permitted the contractor to take and keep title to inventions and patents arising under the contract, while reserving a royalty-free license in the government to practice the inventions for governmental purposes. The theory which these agencies applied was that inventions and patents are only incidental to the specific research or products contracted for and that equity demands nothing more than royalty-free right for the government to use the inventions.

Since within the universities, more often than not, an investigation is carried out with funds acquired under grants and contracts with more than one government agency. and perhaps also with co-mingled funds derived from other sources, the uncertainties as to the applicable patent policy militated strongly against the successful transfer of the technology developed. Generally, and most unfortunately, the most restrictive policy was applied and without much attention to the equities of the respective funding parties, again with an adverse effect on possible transfer of the technology to the public. It has been the experience of years within the universities that the more "title" oriented an agency is toward inventions and patents generated under its funding, the les the likelihood exists that the technology will be successfully transferred for the public benefit.

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An interesting comparison along these lines was made by Harbridge House in its 1968 study of government-funded patents put into use in 1957 and 1962. It was found that contractor-held inventions were 10.7 times as likely as government-held inventions to be utilized in products or processes employed in the private sector for the benefit of the public. Moreover, based upon experience, particularly under the Institutional Patent Agreements as between universities and non-profit organizations on the one hand and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the National Science Foundation on the other hand, there is no reason to suspect that a different conclusion would be reached today.

It seems axiomatic that since the patent system was created as an incentive to invent, develop, and exploit new technology — to promote science and useful arts for the public benefit — when the government holds the patent under the aegis that the inventions of the patent should be freely available to all, much the same as if the disclosure of the invention had been merely published, the patent system cannot operate in the manner in which it was intended. The incentives inherent in the right to exclude conferred upon the private owner of a patent, and which are the inducement to development efforts, are simply not available.

Although for some 20 or more years the argument swirling

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about the ownership of inventions made in whole or in part with government funds was lodged in rhetoric and not in fact, gince 1968, after the first of the new Institutional Patent Agreements were established, a body of evidence has been building which we believe clearly establishes that the universities have been highly successful in transferring technology left with them through licensing under patents while the attempts to license government-owned inventions has been singularly unsuccessful.

Moreover, and of direct importance to the economic well-being of the United States, is the fact that the government patent policy has made much of the technology generated with federal funding available without charge or restriction to foreign countries and companies who have very successfully utilized such technology to capture from their U.S. competitors large segments of various markets. The inevitable result was, of course, an increasing balance of trade deficit.

The university community, in espousing an enlightened uniform government patent policy which will provide an incentive to the transfer of technology, philosophically believes that such policy should apply to all government contracts. As a practical matter, however, the greater need for the patent incentive lies primarily with the universities, non-profit organizations, and small

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businesses.

Technology transfer by universities and nonprofits depends entirely on the underlying patent position, and for small business the patent right is an important element in its ability to compete. Nor should such a policy differentiate as between research and development results which are intended for the government's own use and those which are intended for civilian purposes. It must be presumed in both situations, as pointed out earlier, that the goal of reesearch and development is to generate processes, products, and techniques which will become available to and benefit society in general.

In the light of the performance data and information which is available from experience with the Institutional Patent Agreements there is little doubt in the university community that a uniform government patent policy under which the contractor has the first option to acquire title to inventions made in whole or in part with government funds will provide the maximum stimulus to invention and innovation and will also be in the best interest of the public and of the United States.

We also firmly believe that such a bill should contain appropriate provisions which will protect the contractor against arbitrary acts by agency individuals which might deny the rights in the contractor or delay the effort to

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transfer the technology. To that end it should not provide for the surrender of background patents and should not have compulsory licensing provisions.

Also, from the university viewpoint and given the fact that most university-generated inventions are embryonic in nature and require a great deal of development, and often they are ahead of their time in the commercial sense, and also given the absence of evidence of abuses in the administration of inventions generated in whole or in part with government funds, and also the need for exclusivity in order to convey some exclusivity as an incentive, university communities do not favor the limitation of the contractor's exclusive rights in the invention.

The inclusion of a reasonably payback provision in such a bill would be acceptable to the universities, although the return to the public and the country from successful technology transfer in terms of tangible monies from taxes, such as corporate and individual income taxes, and from 5 ees foreign sources in licensing and know-how feels, and also in intangible benefits, such as in the successful treatment or prevention of disease or improvements in the quality of life, makes the concern about payback rather insignificant.

Moreover, the cost of development of an invention to the market is many times the cost of making the invention originally and any payback should perhaps reflect the

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mgc	1	relative risk dollar equities involved and also reflect the
	2	fact that inventions are almost always incidental to the
	3	federally funded research objective.
	4	We have some specific provisions—suggestions for sprimary ore
	5	S.1215, but suffice it to say that our concerns is with the
	Ó	criteria established for the qualified technology transfer
	7	program, and also the primary concern that under Section
	8	301, the presumption / lies or appears to lie in favor of the
	9	government. We would like to have that presumption stated
	10	more positively in the direction that the contractor takes
	11	title, with certain exemptions, and not that the government
	12	takes title of the particular exceptions.
•	13	It is a philosophical point of view, but we think it is
	14	important f or someone looking to the bill .
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Throughout our considerations, we kept in mind the words mte 1 of Adam Smith in "The Wealth of Nations" where he says, quote: 2 3 "The uniform, constant and uninterrupted effort of every man to better his condition, is frequently powerful enough to 4 5 maintain the natural progress of things toward improvement, in 6 spite both of the extravagance of government and the greatest 7 errors of administration." 8 We look upon S. 1215 as an effort and perhaps a means to 9: curb both the extravagance of governments and its errors of administration in addressing (technical innovation. 10 11 I would like to include a document in the record, which impact of 12 is a lengthy treatment of the various aspects that the patent 13 . Government /impact and policy has upon competition, innovation. 14 public health, economic growth, and jobs, and for eign 15 competition. Senator Schmitt. I certainly hope you will do that. 16 17 record will be open. 13 Mr. Bremer. Thank you for the opportunity to express 19 these views. 20 Senator Schmitt. Before I go to Mr. Marcy, did you 21 comment on the issue of march-in rights? 22 Mr. Bremer. I did not specifically. We have lived with 23 march-in rights in our institutional patent agreements with HEW now for some ten years and with the National Science 24

Foundation since 173, and have not found them onerous.

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Are you centlemen familiar with the patent policies of other countries, particularly the major industrial countries, and if so, could you comment on how they compare with our policy or lack of same?

Mr. Bremer. I think certainly, As far as policies are Ó concerned, we have all heard of sourse of Japan, Incorporated. I think that is an attitudinal approach, also, in Sapph in the sense that there the government tends to cooperate with 3 westers? its companies, chosen ones, to corner its share of the world market for Japan and its companies. And this is certainly in 10 the United Studes contrast to our own antitrust approach in warious of these 11 12 areas.

So from that standpoint, at least, it is a formidable competitor Where the government is cooperating to take technology from outside, where the country itself has almost no resources, and to develop that technology and $\int literally$ use it intour own market (at least, as well as others.

I don't know that in awary area the various other countries, the governments support the R&D function to the extent that they do here, looking toward the cooperation water between botween free enterprise system# in the private _____ the private sector and the government sectors. As you are well aware, in Russia it is quite a different situation. In England, --Dr. Marcy's reference to NRDC -- it's an effort to bull together any inventions made at various universities.

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particularly where government funding has been effected, and to use that agency, NRDC, to license those inventions and to ultimately earn money on them.

Senator Schmitt. Have you any other comments about the NRDC, Mr. Bremer? Are you supportive of that concept?

Mr. Bremer. No, I do not support the NRDC concept. I think I support Mr. Tenny Johnson's view that there should be someone other than another Government agency or an already established agency that oversees these things, perhaps a panel that is established that is free from any agency intervention or control. That would be the most likely approach.

But It is my understanding that currently the NRDC is under attack in Britain from various sources and is considered not to have been successful as it appears on its face.

Senator Schmitt. Dr. Marcy?

Dr. Marcy. Senator, I have to disagree with Mr. Bremer. The NRDC has been under attack not only once but about three times, and each time it has weathered the attack and has come back stronger than ever. At the present moment, it is being supported very vigorously by — well, it was by the former British U.K. Government. I have not heard anything about the present new government that has come in as to what they are planning to do.

Senator Schmitt. Is there a summary or analysis of the NRDC, its history?

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particular products in the United States, and Eli Lilly

2 Company is practically solely responsible for putting NRDC in

the black with the inventions that they have. So this kind of 3

thing is Something that I think ought to be seriously

considered in developing legislation that is directed towards 5

the next step down the road -- what do you do with the patents

7 after you get them.

> Senator Schmitt. I presume you would use this as a means of clearing the decks of the 28,000 patents that now exist in the Government?

> Dr. Marcy. This would be one task that I would think could be assigned to such an organization. On the other hand, I think that task could be assigned to existing organizations within the United States at present through contracting operations similar to what the Office of Energy Related Inventions is doing and also similar to what the National Technical Information Service is currently doing on a very limited basis.

Senator Schmitt. You are probably correct in part, at least, that agencies on an agency-by-agency basis, they have so many other fish to fry that this issue does tend to get subordinated in contract discussions as well as in actual fact.

Mr. Bremer. If I could add something else to that. in I meant that 24 my view of it, When I said the universities were involved, the 25

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153 mte support of the Government goes to the universities for Sanc Froms 2 research projects and /what-not, much as it does in this any invertions wade country, and they, of course, are required to bring that back I believe And you will find 4 That is a university involvement. to NRDC. that / kind of organization as Dr. Marcy mentioned. if you will ramember the names, in mostly the Commonwealth countries or former British Commonwealth countries. Most of them have the same kind of organization. on MADE type of organization ONE OF The main objection I have to that is, in essence, you are |putting all of the eggs back into a basket, again, which 10 under which a tremendous bureaucracy can be established. And .11 ossion elparacasa One of the main/criticisms of that kind of an organization has 12 120 Walnus cropped up several times. as Dr. Marcy mentioned, and (is now 13 guitoubros coming up again, is that the people at the universities doing 14 their warestone the research function do not feel that they are getting 15 adequate attention in each case for the invention, and that is 16 mainly because of the size of the organization and thew the 17 in which inverties evaluation is carried out. 18 consideration is carried out... 174,00 I know Dr. Marcy to his organization, Research 19 Corporation, has some of that same problem because of the 20 very large number of universities for whom they work. 21 22 in fact, heard criticisms of Research Corporation for those 23 very reasons.

Senator Schmitt. Do you agree with Mr. Mossinghoff, who

earlier said that the person who is most likely to see that an

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154 invention -- or something is made of an invention is the mte 2 inventor? when we was 3 Mr. Bremer. You need two people when you are in the We feel out At the university, where you 4 licensing situation. tent to be 5 most inventions (are embryonic in nature, and the ones that has the know-how is the inventor and his immediate therafore, We think it is imperative that he participate in 8 any transfer of technology of the university mentioned: ownson needed in a situation The second man you need under licensing is a champion for the invention and the company which you are licensing, and In 9 10 .11 the absence of such a champion, one who really espouses the invention as a product line perhaps, that the company wishes 12 espouses use of the moentain besthe someony in another way to put out, in the absence of that man, it will go nowhere. 13 the wheelton will generally so nowhere. 14 Cus mort & sege 15 We have had considerable experience along those lines and conclude the the muenton and the mountion e softwo people, these two are necessary for the successful the waventoo and the invention champion transfer to the public. 17 Senator Schmitt. Is this anything different than a 13 19 Dr. Jeckyl-Mr. Hyde personality split within the inventor 20 himself or herself that could be embodied in two people or one 21 person? 22 Mr. Bremer. In our situation. Let me add this. too. on that point Speaking for the universities in general, is rather difficult,

since there are various kinds of arrangements that are

available. In some schools, for example, there is an

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- employment agreement with the professors in the research.
- 2 They have an obligation to the university itself. Other
- 3 places, as at the University of Wisconsin, they do not. The
- 4 inventor there, absent jobligation for federal because of
- 5 Federal funding, is free to do with his inventions whatever he
- 6 wishes. In these situations, he can go directly to the
- 7 industry, and make the participate in the invention
- 8 development, directly and also receive some stipend back
- 9 directly from any successful transfer of that technology. In
- 10 other universities he cannot do that.
- 11 Now where he is free, also, he is very often employed by the
- 12 licensing company as a consultant, and again, that is you his
- 13 own volition and a voluntary act.
- 14 Senator Schmitt. Do you favor that kind of an
- 15 arrangement?
- Mr. Bremer. It has been very successful, in our view, at
- 17 the University of Wisconsin, and I must state that my/practice
- has been limited to that approach. But that has generally
- 19 been credites part of the reason that that University has
- 20 been so successful in technology transfer efforts.
- 21 Senator Schmitt. Section 201(a) of S. 1215 creates a
- 22 central review authority with a power to determine with
- 23 administrative finality any dispute between a federal agency
- 24 and a contractor as to the allocation of rights for an
- 25 invention made under a federal contract.

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mte	1 %	Do you believe, Mr. Bremer, that this review authority
	2	could meaningfully address the concerns that you raise in this
	3	manner?
	4	Mr. Bremer. I think it certainly can. In any situation
	5	you have an equity proposition that attaches, and we have
	5	found very often, under the old saw about what the Government and, in aguity, agglicable.
	7	pays for it should get the university, where you provides the proper environment, and the principal investigation,
	Elica	sicolspace, and provide the man, who is generally salaried by the
	9	state, and other things, We have very often found that the
	10	· equity position is about 50-50 under a grant.
	11	As a consequence, a review authority could consider all
	12	of those factors in addressing a problem such as this.
	13	Senator Schmitt. Also, in your statement and
	14	(Lz. (Marcy may want to comment on this, also the present
	15	Government patent policy has, in a way, ensured that
	16	technology generated with federal funding is available without
	17	charge or restriction to foreign competitors, and they have
	13	more successfully utilized such technology than we have.
	19	Do you think that S. 1215 would treat that problem, or do
	20	you have Suggestions by which we could treat that problem?
	21	Mr. Bremer. In my view, if we can give the contractor
	22	first option to title - probably a solection is made in any
	23	es his abilty core the invention disclosures were made.
	24	We, for example, may get at the University of Wisconsin, on the
	25	960 disclosures a year. We may file patent applications on a

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(third of those. Whether the ether, technology is ever published or not generally, it is from a university but 2 it doesn't lend itself to either patentability or is so narrow in scope that it doesn't lend itself to a licensing on a lumburnty however is in severally disclosed through situation very well. And of course, for a university or a structured by heading much that 5 nonprofit, that is the excelute basis for creating any kind of level a fundamentally basis woon while 6 7 atransfer of the technology I think that the NTIS, of course, Rublishes - they even 9 have an outlet in Japan, I understand, so they can transfer the technology more quickly to the Japanese, who don't seem to 10 get it fast enough. And I think \$1215, with its basic thrust, .11

Senator Schmitt. Dr. Marcy? free disemus den y holmologie

Dr. Marcy. Well, I think one has to realize that the major funding of universities comes from the HEW and from NSF. Therefore, the inventions that come out — I am speaking generally — of the university, the inventions that come out of this type of research are biological, chemical, pharmaceutical, that sort of thing, rather than the so-called high-technology inventions in electronics, and also biomedical devices, diagnostic testing procedures and so on.

Now, the situation regarding that type of invention is quite different from the fact situation in the electronics and mechanical device area. They are much stronger and much more important to the final industrial company that manufactures