



DESERT RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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Dr. John F. Due, Chair
Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees
496 Commerce West
1206 S. Sixth Street
Champagne, Illinois 61820

Dear Dr. Due:

It gives me great pleasure to write in support of the nomination of Mr. Norman Latker to receive an honorary doctor of laws from the University of Illinois, where I might note I spent two enriching years as a post-doc in the physics department in the early sixties.

I have been deeply involved in the management of patents and technology transfer in the university setting for over a decade. Major changes in Federal policy have taken place during this period. These changes have had an enormous positive impact both on our universities and on the nation as a whole. The transfer of technology from the university laboratory to the marketplace has been greatly enhanced. Norman Latker has played the key role in affecting these changes.

He has brought to bear a unique combination of skills in engineering, in law and in the art of technology transfer itself. From my vantage point as a university administrator, his achievements in applying these skills are most significant. In the early seventies he developed the, then, Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Institutional Patent Agreement (IPA). During this period I was with the Rockefeller University and entered into one of these early agreements. I can testify firsthand the almost revolutionary impact it had on the ability to commercialize university inventions in the pharmaceutical field.

Based on the model provided by the IPA, Latker worked tirelessly for nearly a decade to reform federal patent policy government-wide with regard to inventions made under federal sponsorship at universities. His dedication to this effort caused him to suffer the most outrageous of personal assaults from an unsympathetic administration. His devotion to public service and high principle permitted him to persevere through these worst of times. In 1980 his imagination, dedication and perseverance were rewarded by Congress' enactment of new federal patent policy from which the universities and nation will benefit for decades to come.

Norman Latker exemplifies the finest meaning of the phrase "public servant". It would reflect glory on his alma mater to recognize him with an honorary degree.

Sincerely,

Albert Gold
Vice President for Finance
and Administration

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