



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

January 17, 1985

Dr. John F. Due
496 Commerce West
1205 S. 6th St.
Champaign, Illinois 61820

Dear John:

I learned from Assistant Secretary of Commerce, D. Bruce Merrifield, that Mr. Norman J. Latker has been nominated for an Honorary Doctorate Degree from the University of Illinois. I am writing to support this nomination on the basis that Mr. Latker has been a leader in making constructive changes in our patent system to the end that it can facilitate technology transfer from our Federal and university laboratories to the private sectors for development.

One of my colleagues on the legal staff of the United States Department of Agriculture described Latker's activities in this way: "But for his tenaciousness in the face of strong adversaries, sometimes acting as a block against him, the patent policies which he helped to forge never would have been enacted." He has been actively engaged in this effort for many years, the details of which are outlined in Assistant Secretary Merrifield's letter to you of November 13.

One of the reasons Mr. Latker's efforts are yielding greater results now is that he has gained the aggressive and constructive support of his colleagues in the Department of Commerce and, in addition, has been able to establish linkages with other departments of government that are concerned with support of research and the development of the technology that is urgently needed in the private sector if we are to maintain and enhance the competitive position of U.S. industry, business, and commerce in the global market. Although my experience is somewhat limited, I know of the commitment and dedication required for a person in Mr. Latker's position to "make a difference" in the development of policy, the enactment of new legislation, and in the formulation of regulations that lead to policy changes in an area as pervasive as U.S. patenting and procurement policy.

My best wishes for the New Year to you and Jean. Nolie and I are enjoying the Washington scene, and we find our activities sometimes demanding, but usually rewarding.

ORVILLE G. BENTLEY
Assistant Secretary
Science and Education