

December 9, 1977

The Honorable Sam Nunn  
United States Senate  
110 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Sam:

The University of Georgia, as well as many other universities, is very much interested in H. R. 8596, a bill introduced by Representative Thornton, which would greatly improve Government patent policy. We are affected directly as grantees and contractors. A copy of a letter we sent to President Carter urging his support of this bill is enclosed for your information. In addition, a summary of the issues and alternatives from our point of view is enclosed.

We hope, of course, that if the bill reaches the Senate you will support it, but the primary reason we are writing to you at this time is to advise you of our concern that the Senate Select Committee on Small Business, of which you are a member, may be used as a forum for opponents of the bill. We understand that rather hasty arrangements have been made by that Committee to hold hearings on Government patent policy from December 19-21. Persons with whom we have discussed this have indicated that the Committee staff has been very close-vested as regards the witness list. We even understand that small business representatives who favor the Thornton bill approach to Government patent policy have been having difficulty getting information.

We urge you to look into this and to prevent the Committee from being used as a private forum by persons opposed to H. R. 8596. We recommend that any hearings on this subject that are held by the Committee be delayed and announced sufficiently in advance so that all viewpoints may be heard.

If you desire some input from small business representatives to indicate the seriousness of this matter, we suggest you contact Mr. Eric Schellin, Vice Chairman, Board of Trustees, National Association of Small Business, (703) 521-1666.

Thank you for your personal attention to this matter.

Cordially,

Robert C. Anderson  
Vice President for  
Research

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