

Congressman Sam Graves



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Graves' Legislation Picks Up Key Endorsements

Congressman's Bill Would Allow Small Businesses to Continue their Research

(Washington, D.C) U.S. Congressman Sam Graves picked up key endorsements today for his legislation designed to keep small businesses that need venture capital backing from being exempted from small business programs. The Save Biotechnology Innovative Research Act of 2005 (SABIR) would allow companies who get venture capital to be eligible for Small Business programs. Graves said that many small businesses could not survive without the change.

"This change is essential for many small businesses that are trying to do big things," said Graves. "It ensures that small businesses that need venture capital are not penalized."

Many bio-tech companies need extra financial backing because of the high cost of innovative research. Small Businesses who have financial backing greater than 50% are not eligible for small business research grants. This penalizes small companies who work in high technology fields.

"This legislation is needed to eliminate regulatory interpretation that is stifling promising research that could improve the health and lives of people living with many diseases such as HIV, lupus, diabetes, leukemia, Alzheimer's and West Nile virus," said Scott Whitaker, Chief Operating Officer of the Biotechnology Industry Organization. "Congressman Graves' efforts on behalf of the millions of individuals facing devastating and chronic diseases are very much appreciated by the biotech companies anxious to continue their research as well as the patients waiting for new therapies."

More than 60 patient, healthcare and biotechnology groups have signed a letter urging congressional leadership to pass the measure before the end of the current session. Some Missouri business leaders hailed Congressman Graves' stance on the SBIR bill.

"I am grateful to Representative Graves for his leadership in removing barriers to participation in the Small Business Innovation Research program," said David Duncan, President and CEO of Chlorogen in St. Louis. "As the President and CEO of a small business, I believe SBIR grants are essential in the early stages of drug and therapy development, research and testing. SBA's current misguided interpretation must be corrected to the standards in place for the 21 years prior to 2003."

Graves' bill, H.R. 2943, has been referred to the Small Business and Science Committees.

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