

Opening Statement
The Honorable Vernon J. Ehlers (R-MI), Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Research and Science Education
From the Lab Bench to the Marketplace: Improving Technology Transfer
U.S. House of Representatives
June 10, 2010

In today's hearing I hope to learn about partnerships between universities and industry, and how the National Science Foundation is supporting these relationships.

I understand that the Technology and Innovation Subcommittee will be undertaking a comprehensive review of both the Bayh-Dole Act and the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act later this year. I hope that the Research and Science Education Subcommittee will work closely with the other subcommittee on this series of hearings, since we should always be considering the value of commercialization to comprehensive STEM education provided at our universities. It may even be appropriate to consider some joint subcommittee hearings depending on context.

I suspect that most university-partnerships are overwhelmingly fruitful relationships, but I think we need to be mindful of some of the unintended consequences as well. While they are in school, students should be able explore the scientific process, and universities must establish standards for these partnerships that protect students from being transformed into cheap labor for industry.

It is my hope that the witnesses testifying today will offer this Committee insight into ways to improve university-industry technology transfer partnerships and to explore the appropriate federal role. I look forward to the testimony of our distinguished panel, and I thank them for being here.