

Today, the Small Business Administration and 11 participating Federal Agencies leverage the SBIR and STTR Programs to help small innovative firms explore their potential and increase the commercialization of innovations arising out of Federal research and development.

While these critical programs have invested more than \$40 billion in small businesses, many firms, especially those that are minority- or women-owned, still face considerable barriers to participation.

As we look to spur innovation and drive small business growth, Congress should improve the diversity of these programs, enhance access to capital, and expand the eligible uses of funds to better support the needs of U.S. small businesses.

That is why I am proud to introduce this bill to increase the effectiveness of the SBIR and STTR Programs by improving diversity, enhancing access to capital, and expanding the eligible uses of funds.

This bill would direct participating Federal Agencies to use a portion of their SBIR allocation to conduct outreach and provide technical assistance to underserved populations and states.

It would also allow Small Business Investment Companies to participate as investors in SBIR and STTR projects and permanently add testing and evaluation activities permanently as an eligible expense, which can be resource-intensive for small firms, across all relevant agencies.

Additionally, this bill would require participating Federal Agencies to conduct a joint annual meeting to share best practices for improving data collection and streamlining processes across the programs.

I hope my colleagues will join me in support of this bill to improve the effectiveness of the SBIR and STTR Programs.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 616—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS, ITS 10 MEMBER STATES, BRUNEI, CAMBODIA, INDONESIA, LAOS, MALAYSIA, MYANMAR, THE PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE, THAILAND, AND VIETNAM, AND THE UNITED STATES-ASEAN SPECIAL SUMMIT IN WASHINGTON, D.C., AND REAFFIRMING THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO CONTINUE TO REMAIN A STRONG, RELIABLE, AND ACTIVE PARTNER IN THE ASEAN REGION

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. ROMNEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 616

Whereas the 10 members of the Association of South East Asian Nations ("ASEAN") represent a variety of different cultures and beliefs;

Whereas an estimated 7,000,000 United States citizens identify with an ethnicity represented in ASEAN;

Whereas the United States and ASEAN have been cooperating to advance mutual interests for approximately 45 years, having first established dialogue on September 10, 1977, through the Joint Communique of the First ASEAN-United States Dialogue and the United States acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Session in Thailand on July 22, 2009;

Whereas the United States was the first non-ASEAN country to appoint an ambassador to ASEAN on April 29, 2008, and the first non-member to establish a permanent mission to ASEAN in 2010;

Whereas cooperation between the United States Government and the governments and people of ASEAN member states can help realize the common goals of a free, open, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region rooted in a rules-based order that promotes security, opportunity, and dignity to all people;

Whereas ASEAN member states have vibrant economies that have given rise to a flourishing middle class and collectively are predicted to become the fourth-largest economy in the world by 2050;

Whereas, in 2020, the 10 ASEAN member states represented the fifth largest economy in the world and constituted the fourth-largest export market of the United States, with total exports from the United States to ASEAN countries reaching \$111,900,000,000;

Whereas ASEAN is the number one destination for United States investment in the Indo-Pacific, with \$328,500,000,000 in cumulative foreign direct investment;

Whereas ASEAN member states surround critical global sea lanes, with \$5,300,000,000,000 of global trade and more than ½ of the world's total shipped tonnage transiting through the waters of such member states each year;

Whereas the ultimate goal of the ASEAN Economic Community (referred to in this preamble as "AEC") is to create one of the largest single market economies in the world and facilitate the free movement of goods, services, and professionals;

Whereas the United States-ASEAN Single Window custom facilitation system expedites intra-ASEAN trade and enhances the ability of United States businesses to operate in the region;

Whereas the United States-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises has trained more than 20,000 small-to-medium size enterprises, with nearly ½ of the participants being women entrepreneurs;

Whereas the Mekong-U.S. Partnership, established in 2020 to expand upon the Lower Mekong Initiative, promotes sustainable long-term economic development throughout mainland Southeast Asia and fosters regional cooperation, integration, and capacity building;

Whereas the Japan-U.S.-Mekong Power Partnership aims to "promote a more sustainable energy sector and quality energy infrastructure development" and demonstrates the shared commitment of the United States and other Indo-Pacific nations to strengthen ties with Mekong countries;

Whereas, in 2021, the United States announced several additional initiatives to enhance cooperation with ASEAN, including the United States-ASEAN Health Futures, the United States-ASEAN Climate Futures, the United States-ASEAN Economic Futures, and the Billions Futures;

Whereas the United States is cooperating with ASEAN member states and providing emergency health assistance to enhance the resilience of such member states in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the recently announced United States-ASEAN Health Futures program that builds on the more than \$3,500,000,000 the United States has invested in global health collaboration with ASEAN member states over the last 20 years;

Whereas the United States remains committed to working with ASEAN to improve the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental dignity of the people of ASEAN member states, a key ingredient to maintaining stability, promoting economic growth, and advancing good governance and rule of law;

Whereas the Burmese armed forces conducted an illegitimate coup in 2021, usurped the democratic government of Myanmar, killed hundreds of civilians, and displaced more than 300,000 people;

Whereas the Burmese junta has failed to make meaningful progress on ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus or receive official recognition from ASEAN;

Whereas the United States remains concerned about democratic backsliding and the erosion of protections of fundamental human rights in Southeast Asia;

Whereas the United States opposes all actions and claims that infringe upon the freedom and lawful use of the sea and has a national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, open access to the maritime commons of the Indo-Pacific region, and respect for international law in the South China Sea;

Whereas the United States is deeply concerned about recent assertive and unsafe behavior by the People's Republic of China in the South China Sea and urges all countries with competing territorial claims to seek peaceful resolution of disputes through collaborative diplomacy and, as necessary, international dispute resolution mechanisms consistent with international law;

Whereas the United States supports the decision of the Government of the Philippines to use arbitration under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, done at Montego Bay December 10, 1982, to peacefully and lawfully address competing claims;

Whereas the United States supports development of a code of conduct that represents the interests of all parties and promotes peace and stability in the region surrounding the South China Sea, opposes efforts by any nation to use a code of conduct as a vehicle to limit presence in or lawful use of the South China Sea, encourages claimants not to undertake new or unilateral attempts to change the status quo since the signing of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct, including reclamation activities or administrative measures or controls in disputed areas in the South China Sea, and encourages ASEAN countries to adopt a unified position in negotiating the code of conduct;

Whereas the 20th Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training naval exercises featured more than 400 sailors from 21 countries, built greater maritime security on the strength of ASEAN, strengthened navy-to-navy bonds, and exemplified the shared belief in a free and open Indo-Pacific region;

Whereas the Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States declares that "the United States also welcomes a strong and independent ASEAN that leads in Southeast Asia" and "endorse[s] ASEAN centrality and support[s] ASEAN in its efforts to deliver sustainable solutions to the region's most pressing challenges";

Whereas natural disasters in the ASEAN region over the past 4 decades have resulted

in major loss and damage, with a disproportionate impact on developing countries;

Whereas the United States will pursue initiatives that are consistent with sustainable long-term economic development, including—

(1) achievement of food security and poverty alleviation;

(2) improvement of conservation and sustainable management of forests, fish stocks, and oceanic resources;

(3) resilience to extreme weather events that are increasing in frequency and severity; and

(4) provision of sustainable livelihoods for local communities throughout the ASEAN region; and

Whereas, in the invitation for the United States-ASEAN Leaders Summit, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., stated that “the United States is committed to ASEAN centrality and remains steadfast in its support for an ASEAN-centered regional architecture at the heart of the Indo-Pacific”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) welcomes official representatives from the Governments of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam to attend the first United States-ASEAN Special Summit in Washington, D.C.;

(2) supports the decision of the Association of South East Asian Nations (referred to in this resolution as “ASEAN”) to invite non-political representatives from Myanmar to high-level ASEAN events and, furthermore, welcomes such non-political representatives to vocalize concerns on behalf of the Burmese people at the United States-ASEAN Special Summit, and refutes any political representation for the Burmese junta;

(3) supports and affirms the full implementation of the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-409; 132 Stat. 5387 et seq.) with regard to elevating the relationship between the United States and ASEAN, including more than \$2,000,000,000 in annual appropriations for foreign assistance and diplomatic operations in the Indo-Pacific region;

(4) urges the United States-ASEAN Special Summit, scheduled for May 12 and 13, 2022, to prioritize—

(A) democracy, good governance, rule of law, and human rights and address the trend of democratic backsliding in Southeast Asia, including the 2021 coup in Myanmar; and

(B) the pursuit of a robust economic agenda;

(5) reaffirms the importance of United States-ASEAN economic engagement, including the elimination of barriers to cross-border commerce, and supports the goals of the ASEAN Economic Community (referred to in this resolution as the “AEC”) goals, including strong, inclusive, and sustainable long-term economic growth and cooperation with the United States that focuses on innovation and capacity-building efforts in technology, education, disaster management, food security, human rights, and trade facilitation, particularly for the poorest ASEAN member states;

(6) urges ASEAN to continue its efforts to foster greater integration and unity within the ASEAN community, as well as to foster greater integration and unity with non-ASEAN economic, political, and security partners, including Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, the European Union, Taiwan, and India;

(7) calls on ASEAN to reaffirm its commitment, consistent with the fundamental principle in the ASEAN Charter and Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, to the sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally

recognized borders and call for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukraine;

(8) recognizes the value of strategic economic initiatives like United States-ASEAN Connect, which demonstrates a commitment to ASEAN and the AEC and builds upon economic relationships in the region;

(9) supports ASEAN member states in addressing maritime and territorial disputes in a constructive manner and in pursuing claims through peaceful, diplomatic, and, as necessary, legitimate regional and international dispute resolution mechanisms, consistent with international law, including through the adoption of a code of conduct in the South China Sea that represents the interests of all parties and promotes peace and stability in the region;

(10) urges all parties involved in the maritime and territorial disputes in the Indo-Pacific region, including the Government of the People’s Republic of China—

(A) to cease any current activities, and avoid undertaking any actions in the future that undermine stability or complicate or escalate disputes through the use of coercion, intimidation, or military force;

(B) to demilitarize islands, reefs, shoals, and other features, and refrain from new efforts to militarize, including the construction of new garrisons and facilities and the relocation of additional military personnel, materiel, or equipment;

(C) to oppose actions by any country that prevent other countries from exercising their sovereign rights to the resources in their exclusive economic zones and continental shelves by enforcing claims to those areas in the South China Sea that lack support in international law; and

(D) to oppose unilateral declarations of administrative and military districts in contested areas in the South China Sea;

(11) urges parties to refrain from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical damage to the marine environment, and supports the efforts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and ASEAN to implement guidelines to address the illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the region;

(12) supports efforts by United States partners and allies in ASEAN—

(A) to enhance maritime capability and maritime domain awareness;

(B) to protect unhindered access to and use of international waterways in the Indo-Pacific region that are critical to ensuring the security and free flow of commerce;

(C) to counter piracy;

(D) to disrupt illicit maritime trafficking activities, such as the trafficking of persons, goods, and drugs; and

(E) to enhance the maritime capabilities of countries or regional organizations to respond to emerging threats to maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region;

(13) urges ASEAN member states to develop a common approach to reaffirm the 2016 decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favor of the Philippines in the case against the People’s Republic of China for excessive maritime claims;

(14) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to continue joint efforts with ASEAN to halt human smuggling and trafficking in persons, and urges ASEAN to create and strengthen regional mechanisms to provide assistance and support to refugees and migrants;

(15) supports the Mekong-U.S. Partnership, which promotes the stability, peace, prosperity, and sustainable development of the Mekong sub-region through cooperation between countries in the Mekong region and the United States in addressing transboundary challenges; ;

(16) urges ASEAN to build capacity for the promotion and protection of human rights by ASEAN member states and the implementation of related priorities, programs, and activities;

(17) urges the governments of such member states to engage directly with leaders of civil society and human rights organizations, including advocates of religious freedom, victims of human rights abuses, and environmental groups, to ensure these stakeholders have a voice in constructing public policy;

(18) encourages the President to communicate to ASEAN leaders the importance of promoting the rule of law and open and transparent government, strengthening civil society, and protecting human rights, including releasing political prisoners, ceasing politically motivated prosecutions and arbitrary killings, and safeguarding freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech and expression;

(19) supports efforts by organizations in ASEAN that address corruption in the public and private sectors, enhance anti-bribery compliance, enforce bribery criminalization in the private sector, and build beneficial ownership transparency through the ASEAN-USAID PROSPECT project partnered with the South East Asia Parties Against Corruption;

(20) supports the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative as an example of a people-to-people partnership that provides skills, networks, and leadership training to a new generation who will create and fill jobs, foster cross-border cooperation and partnerships, and rise to solve the regional and global challenges of the future; and

(21) applauds the governments of ASEAN member states that have fully upheld and implemented all United Nations Security Council resolutions and international agreements with respect to nuclear and ballistic missile programs in North Korea, and encourages all other governments of such member states to do the same.

SENATE RESOLUTION 617—RECOGNIZING THE ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE TEACHERS OF THE UNITED STATES IN BUILDING AND ENHANCING THE CIVIC, CULTURAL, AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. KING, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. REED, Ms. SMITH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. MANCHIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 617

Whereas education and knowledge are the foundation of the current and future strength of the United States;

Whereas teachers and other education staff have earned and deserve the respect of their students and communities for the selfless dedication of the teachers and staff to community service and the futures of the children of the United States;

Whereas school communities, teachers, and other education staff have risen to the occasion to support their students and communities amid the significant challenges