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May 15, 2002

Senator Ron Wyden
Chairman, Subcommittee on Science, Technology and Space
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6125

Dear Senator Wyden:

As president of the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), I am writing to express BIO's strong support for S. 2037, your bill, that establishes a National Emergency Technology Guard. This legislation will improve the government's ability to identify and partner with innovative biotechnology companies that have not previously been government contractors.

Last fall, the General Accounting Office issued a report entitled "Bioterrorism—Federal Research and Preparedness Activities." In the report, the GAO said the government's "coordination of federal terrorism research, preparedness, and response programs is fragmented . . . several different agencies are responsible for various coordination functions, which limit accountability and hinders unity of effort."

Your bill addresses this problem by requiring the director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to establish a Center for Homeland Security. The center's role, in part, is to serve as a technology clearinghouse for innovative technologies relating to security and emergency preparedness. BIO supports this endeavor and believes that it must include a government wide database of all biodefense/biotech funding opportunities. In addition, as part of the clearinghouse function,

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The Honorable Ron Wyden
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the center should get agreement among the relevant agencies on a standard template to ensure that all the agencies request proposals in the same format. We will work with you to ensure that the center implements these ideas.

We urge the committee to support this legislation. BIO companies are ready and willing to develop new therapeutic medicines, diagnostic kits, rapid response systems and decontamination devices to help defend our nation against bioterrorism. The changes outlined in S. 2037 will help us do so.

Sincerely,



Carl B. Feldbaum
President
Biotechnology Industry Organization

CBF:MW:ks

P. S. Your keynote at the
BIO/DOD Conference made
it an exemplary
inaugural event.