

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to the Florida Research Commercialization  
 3           Matching Grant Program; creating s. 288.9552, F.S.;  
 4           providing legislative findings and intent; creating the  
 5           Florida Research Commercialization Matching Grant Program;  
 6           providing for establishment of a statewide advisory  
 7           committee for certain purposes; providing applicant  
 8           eligibility requirements; providing funding source  
 9           requirements; providing for a selection committee;  
 10          providing requirements for a selection process and awards  
 11          of grants; requiring the program to assist in  
 12          commercialization transitions; requiring the program to  
 13          establish a program participant database for certain  
 14          purposes; providing requirements and procedures for  
 15          assessing the program; requiring reports; providing for  
 16          awards of grants; providing limitations; providing an  
 17          effective date.

18  
 19   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 21           Section 1.   Section 288.9552, Florida Statutes, is created  
 22   to read:

23           288.9552   Florida Research Commercialization Matching Grant  
 24   Program.--

25           (1)   PURPOSE; GOALS AND OBJECTIVES; CREATION OF PROGRAM.--

26           (a)   The purpose of this program is to increase the amount  
 27   of federal funding coming to this state that will produce the  
 28   kind of distinctive technologies that drive today's knowledge-

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

29 based economy. By leveraging federal, state, and private-sector  
30 resources, the program intends to accelerate the innovation  
31 process and more efficiently transform research results into  
32 products in the marketplace.

33 (b) The program is specifically targeted to be a catalyst  
34 for small or startup companies that can take advantage of  
35 federal and state partnerships to accelerate their growth and  
36 market penetration by helping to overcome the funding gap that  
37 many small companies based in this state face. Specific goals  
38 and objectives include:

39 1. Increasing the amount of federal research moneys  
40 received by small businesses in this state through awards from  
41 the Small Business Innovation Research Program and Small  
42 Business Technology Transfer Program of the United States Small  
43 Business Administration's Office of Technology.

44 2. Accelerating new technology-based products' entry into  
45 the marketplace.

46 3. Producing additional technology-based jobs for the  
47 state.

48 4. Providing leveraged resources to increase the  
49 effectiveness and success of applicants' projects.

50 5. Speeding commercialization of promising technologies.

51 6. Encouraging the establishment and growth of high-  
52 quality, advanced technology firms in the state.

53 7. Accelerating deal flow and enhancing the state's  
54 investment infrastructure.

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55 (c) Pursuant to paragraph (a), the Legislature creates the  
56 Florida Research Commercialization Matching Grant Program to  
57 accomplish the goals and objectives specified in paragraph (b).

58 (2) STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.--A statewide advisory  
59 committee shall be established to ensure the inclusion of  
60 statewide perspectives in the development and administration of  
61 the program. Committee membership shall reflect the diverse  
62 nature of research and development and capital investment  
63 industries in the state.

64 (3) APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES.--

65 (a) An applicant must be a small company for which a state  
66 matching grant is necessary for project development and  
67 implementation or a corporation registered with the Secretary of  
68 State to operate in this state. If an applicant is not a  
69 corporation registered to operate in this state, any state award  
70 is contingent upon the applicant successfully registering to do  
71 business in this state.

72 (b) Applicants must be in the process of applying for, or  
73 have applied for or received, a federal award under the Small  
74 Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business  
75 Technology Transfer Program within the previous 12 months prior  
76 to the proposed project. For awards under Phase II of the Small  
77 Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business  
78 Technology Transfer Program, an applicant must have received a  
79 Phase I award and have received an invitation to submit an  
80 application for a Phase II award. If an award has already been  
81 issued, the end date of the federal award must be identified and

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82 justification must be provided as to how these additional funds  
83 will enhance, not supplant, the existing award.

84 (c) All sources of funding for the project must be  
85 identified and meet the following criteria:

86 1. At least 20 percent of the total project funding must  
87 come from the Federal Government or another federal funding  
88 mechanism.

89 2. A maximum of 25 percent of total project funding may be  
90 provided from the program. Requested program funding may not  
91 supplant other project funding. The term "not supplant" means  
92 that program grants must not diminish the amount of funds  
93 committed by other project partners.

94 3. At least 25 percent of project funding must be provided  
95 from sources other than the program and the Federal Government.  
96 Applicant or partner funding may be used to satisfy this  
97 requirement. Funds may be either cash or in-kind.

98 4. Applicant projects funded by program grants must be  
99 conducted in this state.

100 (4) SELECTION COMMITTEE.--A critical component of the  
101 program shall be the assessment and selection of matching fund  
102 award recipients. This process shall be quick, efficient,  
103 impartial, and serve the needs to the industry applicants that  
104 apply for program support. To address this need, a selection  
105 committee shall be established, composed of members who are  
106 experienced in conducting, reviewing, and evaluating research  
107 and development projects as well as those who have been  
108 successful in developing commercialization programs and managing  
109 investment in early-stage companies. The selection committee

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110 shall review matching fund applications, implement consistent  
111 selection criteria, participate in the selection process, and  
112 select award recipients.

113 (5) SELECTION PROCESS.--

114 (a) The selection committee shall issue an open call  
115 request for funding proposals in the form of a match  
116 solicitation. The solicitation shall include the award amount  
117 available, reporting and proposal preparation guidance, and any  
118 required application forms. To qualify for an award under a  
119 match solicitation, an applicant must have been notified that it  
120 is the recipient of a federal Phase I award under the Small  
121 Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business  
122 Technology Transfer Program.

123 (b) Applications for awards from the program shall be  
124 submitted to the project manager of the program administrator  
125 who shall review the applications for completion and compliance  
126 with program standards. After such review, the project manager  
127 shall forward the applications to the selection committee.

128 (c) After receiving the applications from the project  
129 manager, the selection committee shall convene, review, and vote  
130 within a period of 10 days to award funds based on criteria that  
131 may include the company's history of operations, phase I results  
132 under the Small Business Innovation Research Program or Small  
133 Business Technology Transfer Program, and the impact on economic  
134 development in this state. Applicants may respond to any  
135 questions by the selection committee during this 10-day period.  
136 The purpose of providing applicants with a 10-day response  
137 period is to enable companies to respond rapidly to a Phase II

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138 proposal and reduce the amount of time spent seeking additional  
139 development funding. The funding provided to each applicant  
140 shall be determined based on total funding available, program  
141 constraints, and the discretion of the selection committee.

142 (d) Matching funds shall be distributed to companies only  
143 upon notification of a successful Phase II award under the Small  
144 Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business  
145 Technology Transfer Program. The project manager shall remain in  
146 contact with all matching funds applicants from the time an  
147 application to the program is submitted until the termination of  
148 a company's participation in the program as signified by a  
149 denial of the Phase II award or the completion of Phase II work  
150 and entering into commercialization activities under Phase III.

151 (e) Upon notification by the project manager of an  
152 approved application, a company may apply for a Phase II award  
153 with evidence of matching funds for purposes of demonstrating  
154 external support for the project to the federal Small Business  
155 Innovation Research Program or Small Business Technology  
156 Transfer Program committees and enhance potential commercial  
157 development opportunities for the company.

158 (f) After a company has notified the program manager of  
159 the Phase II award, matching funds shall be distributed and the  
160 award shall be recorded in the matching funds database for  
161 purposes of initiating the development and reporting phase of  
162 the relationship between the company and the program.

163 (6) COMMERCIALIZATION TRANSITION.--For purposes of  
164 enabling companies to successfully make the transition to  
165 commercialization from Phase II to Phase III under the Small

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166 Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business  
167 Technology Transfer Program, the program shall engage companies  
168 at the end of Phase I to help them address commercialization  
169 planning in their Phase II proposals, thus enhancing their  
170 potential for successful company growth and development in this  
171 state.

172 (7) DATABASE.--To further support companies entering Phase  
173 III, the program shall establish a database to be used to track  
174 program participant progress and to provide access to investors  
175 and venture capital firms. Angel investors and venture  
176 capitalists seeking investment opportunities in this state may  
177 use the database to easily locate emerging technology companies  
178 throughout the state participating in the program.

179 (8) PROGRAM ASSESSMENT.--To monitor the success and impact  
180 of the program, the following assessments shall be made as  
181 appropriate:

182 (a) Companies that apply for and receive funding from the  
183 program shall submit to the program administrator quarterly  
184 reports documenting their progress and use of funds. The program  
185 shall maintain the information in such reports for purposes of  
186 monitoring program assessment and maintaining contact with award  
187 recipients. Each award recipient shall also provide the program  
188 administrator with a final report upon conclusion of its Phase  
189 II activities.

190 (b) The program administrator shall maintain a database of  
191 award recipients with company profiles and contact information.

192 (c) The program administrator shall provide the statewide  
193 advisory committee with an annual report regarding awards

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194 issued, progress made by award recipients, and overall program  
195 results. The program administrator shall also provide the  
196 committee with suggestions for enhancing the program.

197 (9) AWARDS.--The program shall make 20 to 30 awards,  
198 ranging from \$100,000 to \$250,000 each, for a total of \$5  
199 million.

200 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.