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ALBANY – Two pieces of legislation pertaining to business incubators – one at the federal level and one at the state level – were endorsed by the board of directors of the Business Incubator Association of New York State at its most recent meeting.

The federal bill endorsed by the association is [S.1662](#), introduced by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and cosponsored by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-New York). The state bill is [A7229/S5419](#) known as the Academic Research Information Access Act, whose major sponsors in each chamber are Assemblyman Robin Schimminger (D-Tonawanda) and Sen. Bill Stachowski (D-Buffalo).

Under S.1662, the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce would be authorized for the first time to cost-share with states and localities certain programmatic operations of business incubators, rather than sharing in their construction costs alone.

“Here in New York State, we join the National Business Incubation Association in identifying this as a very significant change, since programmatic excellence is at the heart of successful business incubators,” said David Hochman, executive director. “We urge the rest of the state’s congressional delegation and the Governor’s Washington office to get behind this bill and to monitor other Congressional action pertinent to incubators and research parks.”

A7229/S5419 would authorize the state Department of Economic Development to enter into umbrella licensing agreements with providers of expensive on-line scientific and technical resources. The bill would extend free access to tenants of business incubators affiliated with most colleges and universities in the state, or to small businesses in any state Empire Zone, or to small businesses receiving grant funding from NYSTAR, Empire State Development Corporation, or NYSERDA.

“Together, these categories cover tenants in the solid majority of our member incubators,” said Hochman. “We urge the Governor to sign the bill, and we will keep working with the New York State Higher Education Initiative to expand access to *all* incubator tenants. Our board thinks this idea represents the best shot at assuring continued access for technical entrepreneurs even if institutional library budgets are cut.”

BIA/NYS is a statewide association of business incubators. For more information see <http://bianys.com>