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From: Malcolm S. Townes, Ph.D. student, Public and Social Policy

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Re: POLS6310 Spring 2019, class 06

**Introduction**: A brief description of your policy domain, the specific policy you are exploring, and the importance of the problem you are addressing.

* Policy domain: Technology Transfer Policy
* Specific policy:
  + Public Law 97-219 Small Business Innovation Act of 1982
    - Policy Design
      * Established set-aside of 2.5% of extramural research and development budgets in excess of $100 million for SBIR grants for small businesses.
      * Established set-aside of 0.3% of extramural research and development budgets in excess of $1 billion for STTR grants for small businesses.
    - Legislative Predecessors
      * S.881 - Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1981 - 97th Congress (1981-1982)
      * H.R.4326 - Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982 - 97th Congress (1981-1982)
  + Most recently reauthorized through FY2017 by Public Law 112-81 (2012 Defense Authorization Act)
* Importance of Problem:
  + Problem:
    - Dissatisfaction with the participation rate of small businesses in Federal research and development.
      * Since the late 1970s, the participation rate of small business has held steady a roughly 4 percent of all Federal research and development spending.
      * Small businesses are an under-utilized resource that can generate the technological innovation needed to staunch economic stagnation and maintain the global competitiveness of the United States.
    - Dissatisfaction with the amount and rate of transfer of technologies derived from Federally-funded research and development to the private sector to benefit the public interest.
      * Specific issues:
        + Technology transfer is slow and requires significant effort and resources (i.e., efficiency).
        + Technology transfer policy only results in a very small number and percentage of technologies derived from Federally-funded research and development being transferred to the private sector to benefit the public interest (i.e., effectiveness)
      * Key priority for the past three presidential administrations:
        + Donald J. Trump Administration
        + Barrack H. Obama Administration
        + George W. Bush Administration
  + In 2018, the Federal government spent over $143 billion on research and development.

**Legislative History**: The problem the legislation was meant to address, the key provisions of the policy you are highlighting for analysis, and the current state of the policy (i.e. is it firmly established or are there attempts at repeal or modification), the key stake holders (pro and con) who are focused on the issue.

* Problem the legislation was meant to address:
  + Staunching and reversing the economic stagnation that the United States was facing in the latter part of the 1970s.
  + Reversing trends in technological innovation that were believed to be a threat to the continued global competitiveness of the United States.
* Key policy provisions highlighted for analysis:
  + Four objectives for the policy:
    - To stimulate technological innovation;
    - To use small business to meet Federal research and development needs;
    - To foster and encourage participation by minority and disadvantaged persons in technological innovation; and
    - To increase private sector commercialization of innovations derived from Federal research and development.
  + Analysis focuses on the first and second objectives.
    - Most of the debate seemed to focus on the role of small business in technological innovation.
      * To stimulate technological innovation
      * To use small business to meet Federal research and development needs
* Current state of policy:
  + Firmly established.
    - Policy has been in place for nearly 40 years.
    - There have been no significant modifications to the policy design since its original enactment.
  + Unsuccessful bills introduced to amend the act:
    - H.R.448 - SBIR Enhancement Act of 2011 - 112th Congress (2011-2012)
      * Increase minimum set-aside for SBIR from 2.5% to 5% of extramural research and development budgets in excess of $100 million
      * Increase minimum set-aside from 0.3% to 0.6% of extramural research and development budgets in excess of $1 billion.
      * Increases maximum award amounts from $100,000 to $200,000 for Phase 1 grants and from $750,000 to $1.5 million for Phase 2 grants.
    - H.R.2772 - SBIR and STTR Enhancement Act - 111th Congress (2009-2010)
      * Increases award levels.
      * Provides authority for agencies to award sequential Phase 2 grants.
      * Provides authority for agencies to award Phase 2 grants to applicants that have not been awarded Phase 1 grants.
      * Requires agencies to issue solicitations at least twice per year.
      * Establishes reporting requirements.
    - H.R.4213 - Amend the SBIR program to increase award amounts - 110th Congress (2007-2008)
      * Allows agencies to increase award amounts.
      * Requires agencies to adjust award amounts every five years to reflect economic adjustments and programmatic considerations.
    - H.R.4684 - Amend the SBIR program to increase award amounts - 109th Congress (2005-2006)
      * Allows agencies to increase award amounts.
      * Requires agencies to adjust award amounts every five years to reflect economic adjustments and programmatic considerations.
* Key stakeholders focusing on the issue:
  + Proponents
    - There were more than 50 co-sponsors for the bill in the Senate by the time of the first hearings.
    - In the end there were 84 co-sponsors for the bill in the Senate.
    - Key proponents include:
      * Roland Tibbets (Senior Program Director, National Science Foundation)
      * Senator Paul Tsongas (D-MA)
      * Senator Edward “Ted” M. Kennedy (D-MA)
  + Opponents
    - Primarily tenured and tenure-track faculty and research faculty and research universities.
    - Senior leaders and researchers at research laboratories that must compete for federal funding.
    - Primary opposition was because they believed it reduced funding opportunities for their researchers and took away from basic research.

**The Framing Arguments of Key Stakeholders**: Possible questions to answer in approaching this analysis are: do any of the frames follow the rubrics suggested by the Frameworks Institute? Did the issue move from episodic to thematic? Is the policy category being contested - redistributive, regulatory, etc.? What major morality tale is being appealed to? How are context, numbers, messengers, etc. being used? Is the policy branch or root?

* Alignment with Frameworks Institute rubrics:
* Issue type (episodic or thematic):
  + Proponents
    - Thematic in nature.
    - Issue discussed in context of economic stagnation and loss of global competitiveness if current trends persist.
* Policy category:
  + Redistributive
  + Regulatory
* Morality tale:
  + Proponents
    - Mob at the Gate
    - Rot at the Top
  + Opponents
    - Benevolent Community
    - Triumphant Individual
* Context:
  + Proponents
    - Economic stagnation of the late 1970s
    - Loss of global competitiveness
  + Opponents
    - Did not seem to establish a social context for their argument.
* Numbers:
  + The facts seemed to fit the frame of proponents.
  + Neither side seemed to discuss numbers in a social context to provide meaning and enhance comprehension.
* Messengers:
  + Proponents
    - Prominent U.S. Senators who supported the policy seemed to be viewed as being above the fray and primarily concerned with the well-being of the nation rather than any particular interest group.
    - Presidents of businesses with more than 1,000 employees who would not directly benefit from the policy advocated for it.
* Approach (branch or root):
  + Branch approach
  + Originally began as a pilot program only within the National Science Foundation.
  + The policy did not radically change the process for disbursing research and development funding.