

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

March 15, 2024

The Honorable Alejandra Castillo  
Assistant Secretary for Economic Development  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Suite 71014  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo:

As you consider applications for Phase 2 of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs (Tech Hubs) program, we write in strong support of the Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing (APM) Tech Hub proposal – located in the Richmond-Petersburg region of Virginia. Led by the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM), the APM Tech Hub proposal will ensure that essential pharmaceuticals are manufactured domestically by employing regional assets, scientific capabilities, and public and private investment to spur the growth, innovation, and sustainability of the U.S.-based pharmaceutical manufacturing industry.

The APM Tech Hub's mission to address lifesaving and life-sustaining medicine access in the U.S. has been supported by recent federal investments, including a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) contract to manufacture a secure supply of quality active pharmaceutical ingredients and essential medicines for the nation, as well as an EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC) award. Recently, the National Science Foundation also awarded members of the APM consortia a Regional Innovation Engine Development Award. Continued investment in manufacturing innovations and capabilities needed to re-shore pharmaceutical manufacturing, as outlined in the APM Tech Hub proposal, is necessary for the U.S. to maintain its position as a global leader in pharmaceuticals.

The APM Tech Hub application proposes seven component projects to invest in infrastructure, technology maturation, workforce development, and the strategy to realize sustainable Hub growth. These projects build on and complement prior investments in physical infrastructure necessary for advanced manufacturing by bolstering the Hub's physical assets, while developing a strong pipeline for accelerated technology maturation to reach global leadership in the industry and an industry-led, competency-based workforce development program that is designed to be adaptive to ensure the workforce is prepared to operate at the leading edge of this industry.

Requested investments are designed to build upon the strong footprint in historically distressed areas in the Richmond and Petersburg region established in the BBBRC application, where the growth of this cluster will continue to help revitalize the regional economy and bring numerous high-paying jobs in this emerging industry.

Leveraged with commitments from the Commonwealth and private consortium members totaling nearly \$300 million, a Tech Hubs implementation award would provide integral, continued

resources needed to ensure the APM Tech Hub's progress and a resilient, quality drug supply for our nation. The Hub will benefit from two proposed investments from Virginia's General Assembly, including:

1. \$90 million for "Virginia's Research Triangle" that will launch a biotechnology, life sciences, and pharmaceutical manufacturing network to foster collaboration among three of the Commonwealth's major existing university research institutions, laying the groundwork for startup innovation and commercialization that will fuel the APM Tech Hub. The Accelerator Component Project has been designed in partnership with the Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation, where funds have been committed to entrepreneurial and ecosystem development efforts in alignment with the proposed Research Triangle.
2. \$16 million for the Virginia Department of Health to establish a critical Opioid Overdose Reversal Agent Program, which aims to utilize the APM Tech Hub's advanced pharmaceutical development and manufacturing campus in Petersburg.

Advanced manufacturing technologies reduce the time and cost of manufacturing, break down barriers to access to affordable health care, and lessen the environmental burden of this essential industry. Supported by federal and state investments, as well as a strong and growing coalition of partners, the APM Tech Hub proposal reimagines the manufacturing of medicines and is positioned to realize a sustainable, globally competitive APM Tech Hub within the coming decade that addresses urgent national security interests and critical unmet social needs.

If funded, CCAM's APM Tech Hub proposal will help harness federal, state, and private resources to accelerate APM in the Commonwealth of Virginia to create a sustainable, globally competitive manufacturing hub within a decade. We strongly support this critical project for Virginia and our national security and respectfully request you give this application full and fair consideration.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to help carry out the Tech Hubs program and re-shore key industries in the U.S.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



Tim Kaine  
United States Senator

  
Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress

  
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress

  
Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress

  
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

  
H. Morgan Griffith  
Member of Congress

  
Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
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Ben Cline  
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Jennifer Wexton  
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Jen A. Kiggans  
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