

The FAST Fix Act of 2019

U.S. Senator Jim Risch

Problem: The Federal and State Technology (FAST) Partnership Program [[15 USC 657d](#)] provides \$125,000 grants to entities in states to establish a one-year SBIR/STTR outreach and training program intended to facilitate more awards in their state. The competitive grant is awarded by SBA to entities, taking special consideration if the entity is located in a state that has historically lacked awards. Only one entity is allowed to apply per state and must have a Governor's signature. However, despite the intention of the program, currently all applicants, regardless of SBIR/STTR award history, are equally considered for the FAST program under a one-size-fits-all application process. As a result, the federal resource intended to bolster awards in underserved states is not penetrating those very states it's intended to serve.

Solution: The *FAST Fix Act of 2019* would increase competition for FAST grants in each state and give priority to applicants located in historically underperforming States to encourage more SBIR/STTR awards are distributed to rural underserved areas.

Cosponsors: U.S. Senators Crapo, Capito, Hoeven, Rosen and Kennedy.

This bill would make the following changes to current law:

- Better target funds to require the Administrator to give first priority and special consideration to an applicant located in an underperforming state
- Increase competition by allowing multiple applications from each state to apply for FAST awards
- Encourage activity from inactive states by giving authority to the Administrator to waive their matching requirements
- Lower the matching requirements for the bottom tier of FAST recipients from 50 cents to 25 cents, and the middle tier from 75 cents to 50 cents
- Obligate FAST awards to be distributed to recipients for two years instead of one to allow enough time to garner results
- Require the Administrator to publish statistics regarding the ranking of the States for FAST awards
- Increase the amount of the award for each recipient while remaining budget neutral
- Expire after 5 years

The FAST Fix Act is endorsed by SSTI, a national nonprofit that focuses on enhancing technological advancements in the U.S. economy.

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