

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

4 June 2013

Re: Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) Amendment Bill 2013

Dear Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade,

I am writing on behalf of the membership of AusBiotech in relation to the changes proposed by the *Export Market Development Grants Amendment Bill 2013*.

AusBiotech is a well-connected network of over 3,000 members in the life sciences, including therapeutics, medical technology (devices and diagnostics), food technology and agricultural, environmental and industrial biotechnology sectors; working on behalf of members for more than 25 years to provide representation to promote the global growth of Australian biotechnology.

This Bill proposes to redirect export market promotion funding from the USA/Canada, European Union and United Kingdom markets to the East Asian area, with grants for years six, seven and eight being abolished for the all applicants except approved bodies.

Of considerable concern to AusBiotech is that there is no clear evidence that a market impact analysis has occurred to inform these changes, particularly in relation to how small and medium-sized business will be affected. While the changes to the Act will enable grants to be paid quicker, many of our member companies rely heavily on grant funding through the EMDG scheme to access key global markets. Approximately 90% of Australian biotech and medtech export markets reside in the US, Canada and the European Union and if this Bill is passed we foresee considerable impact on our industry exporters.

AusBiotech strongly believe that in export terms, established markets are as important as emerging ones, and it should be up to the individual businesses as to where they see fit to establish and build their export markets. AusBiotech also strongly believe it unhelpful to exporters to discriminate against businesses working in particular markets.

Yours sincerely

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