



March 20, 2006

The Honorable Michael Chertoff  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

On the behalf of the Georgia Biomedical Partnership (GBP), I want to express our strong support for locating the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) in Georgia.

The GBP is the private, non-profit association representing the life sciences industry in Georgia. Our members total more than 270 pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device companies, research institutions, government agencies, and other business groups across the state. These companies and organizations, which employ tens of thousands of life sciences professionals, are international leaders in research and development of the life sciences products for healthcare, agriculture, industrial production and environmental management. Georgia ranks among the top 10 U.S. states in biotech companies alone.

Georgia provides an ideal environment for a 21<sup>st</sup> century research facility like that envisioned by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for NABF. The state leads the nation in bringing business, research universities and government together in a grand collaboration of life sciences innovation. This cooperative spirit will give the NABF the advantage of having an extensive network of professional support to help the research facility succeed in its mission.

With headquarters in the Athens, Georgia, area, NABF will be part of a world-class bioscience research community at the University of Georgia

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and part of an existing federal research community made up of U.S. Department of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency facilities.

In the Athens area, NABF scientists and administrators also will be part of a strong state bioscience community that includes nearby Atlanta and Augusta. In addition to renowned research institutions such as University of Georgia, Emory University, Georgia Institute of Technology and the Medical College of Georgia, the state's bioscience community is home to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as a variety of leading bioscience companies, such as Merial, Noramco, UCB Pharma, Solvay Pharmaceuticals, Serologicals, AtheroGenics, and Inhibitex. All these groups are GBP members.

These companies and research centers have thrived in Georgia not only because of the high quality of management, scientific, and technical talent available, but also because of aggressive support for life sciences development by the General Assembly and Governor's Office. Governor Sonny Perdue, for example, has designated the life sciences industry a top strategic industry for the future economic growth of the state, and he has pledged to strengthen Georgia's reputation as a state of innovation.

The GBP urges the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to locate the NABF in Georgia. With the presence of a fast growing, internationally renowned bioscience community and a tradition of strong support for the country's national defense infrastructure, Georgia is an ideal choice for the NABF.

Sincerely,

  
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