

Report Summary

The National Biotechnology Initiative Act (NBIA)

Bipartisan legislation promotes federal coordination and streamlines the regulatory structures currently inhibiting biotechnology innovation

Congress established the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology (NSCEB) to assess biotechnology's national security impact and recommend strategies to ensure American leadership.

Overview

The National Biotechnology Initiative Act (H.R.2756 and S.1387) would direct the President to establish, in 180 days, the National Biotechnology Initiative, a whole-of-government approach to advancing U.S. national security, economic productivity, and competitiveness. To carry out the Initiative, the bill would establish:

01

A National Biotechnology Coordination Office within the Executive Office of the President to lead and coordinate federal biotechnology efforts.

02

A principal advisor to the President for biotechnology, who would also serve as Director of the Coordination Office.

03

An Interagency Committee to coordinate across the federal departments and agencies.

04

Clear roles and responsibilities for all federal departments and agencies engaged in biotechnology.

Background

According to the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology's (NSCEB) April 2025 report to Congress, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has made biotechnology a strategic priority for 20 years. For China, that means massive government investment in its own biotechnology champions, legally and illegally acquiring foreign intellectual property (IP), amassing biological data, prioritizing talent development, pushing the boundaries of innovation without ethical constraints, and showing up in force to influence international standards setting bodies.

In contrast, the U.S. government has not adequately recognized biotechnology as a strategic priority, despite its serious implications for economic and national security.

The federal government instead maintains a jumble of biotechnology-related strategies, investments, and committees scattered across agencies. Biotechnology research, regulation, workforce, policy, and more are treated as discrete issues rather than holistically, creating a disconnect between the federal government and key industry stakeholders. The U.S. government must take concrete steps to address this strategic vulnerability, or risk ceding leadership in next industrial revolution—one centered on our ability to engineer biology—to China.

Legislative Details

Activities

The Initiative, through the Coordination Office [NSCEB Recommendation 1.1a] and the Interagency Committee, would be charged with carrying out activities related to promoting interagency coordination, national security, research and development, biological data, product commercialization, regulatory streamlining, biosecurity and biosafety, workforce and bioliteracy development, and international outreach.

Senior Agency Leadership

Each participating agency would be directed to designate an individual at the Assistant Secretary level to lead the agency's biotechnology activities and to represent the agency in the interagency committee [NSCEB Recommendation 1.2a].

Regulatory Streamlining

The Coordination Office will be responsible for streamlining biotechnology regulation by easing regulatory burdens for well-understood products, negotiating interagency agreements to describe clear regulatory pathways, and working with the Office of Management and Budget in cases of disagreement. [NSCEB Recommendation 2.1a]

Website

The Coordination Office would establish a website to share information about federal biotechnology efforts within 540 days.

Reporting and Reviews

The National Biotechnology Coordination Office would publish a national biotechnology strategy every five years, submit an annual report to relevant Congressional committees, and be reviewed by the Government Accountability Office every five years.

Cost and Administration

The Initiative would be administratively operated and funded through the National Science Foundation at \$132 million over five years.

Wind-down

The Initiative would wind-down its activities after 20 years.

H.R.2756

Sponsor:

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Original Co-Sponsor:

Rep. Ro Khanna
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S.1387

Sponsor:

Sen. Todd Young
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