

Centers for Biotechnology Act

Overview

The **Centers for Biotechnology Act** would direct the Secretary of Energy to establish, on a competitive and merit-reviewed basis, no fewer than six Centers for Biotechnology at the Department of Energy (DOE) National Laboratories. These Centers would serve as research facilities to advance interdisciplinary biotechnology research, enable large-scale research projects, and provide biotechnology researchers with access to advanced research tools, such as high-performance computing.

Background

The National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology (NSCEB) assessed in April 2025 that the United States must reinvigorate its historic strengths in biotechnology innovation. While the United States currently leads in biotechnology research and development (R&D), that lead is slipping as China surges ahead — in part because biotechnology innovation requires specialized research infrastructure for interdisciplinary collaboration.

To achieve breakthroughs in biotechnology discovery akin to what Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory has done with [fusion research](#), the United States must enable researchers across government, academia, and industry to access state-of-the-art equipment and instrumentation available at the DOE National Laboratories.

The creation of six Centers of Biotechnology within the 17 existing National Laboratories would:

- provide facilities for interdisciplinary biotechnology research, discovery, and development;
- encourage large-scale research projects that have some risk of failure but could lead to huge leaps in the study, development, or adoption of biotechnology; and
- provide biotechnology practitioners access to expensive resources and instrumentation, such as supercomputers and advanced measurement capabilities.

Available for House introduction

Available for Senate introduction

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

Read the NSCEB's April 2025 report at <https://www.biotech.senate.gov/final-report>

Legislative Details

01 Focus Areas

Each Center for Biotechnology would have a specialized focus area, based on its specific strengths. These could include:

- biological data and computation;
- advanced biological measurements;
- production of materials and chemicals using biology;
- biotechnology risk assessment and mitigation; and
- biomanufacturing scale-up innovation.

02 Intra-agency Advisory Committee

The Secretary of Energy would establish an advisory committee responsible for selecting the National Laboratories that would host each of the Centers, designating focus areas, reorganizing or combining biotechnology-related activities across the National Laboratories to complement the new Centers, and minimizing duplicative efforts.

03 Strategic Plan and Annual Reports

The advisory committee would submit an initial strategic plan for the Centers, as well as annual reports to Congress.

04 Cost

Each Center would receive \$30 million per year for the first five to seven years of operation, with renewal eligibility for an additional five-year period. Congress would appropriate a total of \$1.2 billion over five years to support the creation of the Centers.

Interested in leading or co-sponsoring this bill?

Please contact ideas@biotech.senate.gov

