

National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology

October 19, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Jon Tester
Chair
Subcommittee on Defense Committee
on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chair
Subcommittee on Defense Committee
on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Senator Tester, Representative Calvert, Representative McCollum:

Scaling up biotechnology manufacturing affords the U.S. the opportunity to create high paying jobs across the country, shore up supply chains of key goods like chemicals, materials, and fuel, and create better performing products with fewer associated environmental impacts. As members of the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology, we urge you to consider providing the highest amount possible for the Defense Production Act (DPA) account for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024.

The Department of Defense (DOD) proposed a robust budget for DPA for FY24, including a significant investment to support a jump-start to the biomanufacturing economy that will be beneficial to both our national defense and our economic competitiveness in this rapidly growing sector. China is rapidly closing the technology gap by investing in biotechnology research, development, and production across sectors. We cannot afford to lose a step to China in scaling our biomanufacturing capacity by failing to prioritize these investments in a moment when they are urgently needed.

In 2022, DOD announced plans to invest \$1 billion in domestic manufacturing infrastructure for the biotechnology industry over the next five years. This approach is consistent with work across administrations to harness the potential of advanced biotechnology capabilities that meet warfighter needs. Accordingly, the FY24 President's Budget for DPA purchases included \$200M for biomanufacturing capacity development.

As we have canvassed the biotechnology industry and engaged with DOD, we have learned two things: First, biomanufacturing has the potential to address a range of DOD capability gaps and supply chain vulnerabilities in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible manner. Innovators are routinely developing and scaling biotech alternatives to existing products as well as developing products with novel properties.

Second, biomanufacturing infrastructure is capital intensive to develop, just like any manufacturing infrastructure. We have met with several biotechnology companies that are ready to scale that cannot find appropriate infrastructure in the U.S. do so. For example, we recently heard from a U.S. company that is using biotechnology to lessen our dependence on China for the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients that go into all of our small molecule medicines. This company is currently manufacturing in Europe because there was not adequate infrastructure in the U.S. for their needs.

The U.S. stands to lose scale-up and commercial production capacity to other countries, including in Europe and Asia, that are investing more rapidly and intentionally in biomanufacturing infrastructure than we are. The DPA funding intended for biomanufacturing represents a timely opportunity to inject much-needed government capital into a sector that holds enormous potential for meeting national defense needs and creating jobs across our country, especially near feedstock sources in the U.S. heartland.

Given these considerations, we ask you to consider providing historic, robust DPA funding in any final FY24 appropriations package and to support critical investments in biomanufacturing infrastructure. This demonstration of commitment to this critical industry will support the important work of scaling up biomanufacturing infrastructure as planned, maintaining our technological edge over China, providing certainty to this important industry, and realizing the enormous job-creating potential of this technology. We would be glad to provide the Committee with any additional information that you require and thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jason Kelly, Chair



Dr. Michelle Rozo, Vice-Chair



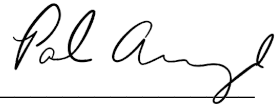
Sen. Alex Padilla, Commissioner



Sen. Todd Young, Commissioner



Rep. Ro Khanna, Commissioner



Paul Arcangeli, Commissioner



Dr. Angela Belcher, Commissioner



Dawn Meyerriecks, Commissioner



Dr. Eric Schmidt, Commissioner



Dr. Alexander Titus, Commissioner



Dr. Dov Zakheim, Commissioner