

Building Momentum: Congress advances numerous Commission recommendations to strengthen U.S. biotechnology

Since our inception in 2023, the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology (NSCEB) has published our [Interim Report](#) and many other [policy materials](#) that are catalyzing new ideas across Congress and driving members to introduce policies to strengthen U.S. biotechnology.

Because of our research and outreach efforts, the NSCEB’s policy ideas have been incorporated in legislative packages and introduced as individual bills, with enthusiastic support on both sides of the aisle.

Congress charged the NSCEB with exploring the future of biotechnology and charting how emerging technologies could impact current and future activities of the U.S. government. Our mandate includes a report to Congress with policy recommendations to prepare the United States to capitalize on emerging biotechnologies, strengthen the U.S. biotechnology sector, and secure our global leadership.

Given the urgency of this mission, the NSCEB is not waiting until we release our final report to make an impact. We are already hard at work engaging with policymakers on biotechnology initiatives and pushing important ideas forward. Our ongoing legislative impact demonstrates bipartisan and bicameral confidence in the NSCEB’s mission and recommendations.

2024 NSCEB Legislative Impact

NSCEB-Authored Agriculture Bills Introduced in Congress

Our first three legislative proposals—the [Agriculture and National Security Act](#), the [Agricultural Biotechnology Coordination Act](#), and the [Biotechnology Oversight Coordination Act](#)—direct the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other agencies to consider emerging technology in multiple ways. Our Congressional Commissioners, Senator Alex Padilla, Senator Todd Young, Representative Stephanie Bice, and Representative Ro Khanna, introduced these bills in June 2024. Each bill makes structural improvements that strengthen the government’s abilities at the intersection of national security and emerging biotechnology. For the Commission, national security includes food security, economic security, and agricultural supply chains, all of which are relevant to USDA’s mission.

NSCEB-Endorsed Bipartisan Synthetic Biology Advancement Act Introduced in the Senate

Our Senate Congressional Commissioners introduced the [Synthetic Biology Advancement Act](#). Originally sponsored by Senator Young and endorsed by the Commission, this bill would create a Synthetic Biology Center under USDA with a focus on the application of synthetic biology to food security and agriculture.

NSCEB-Authored Agriculture Recommendations Included in the House Farm Bill

Commission recommendations are included in the latest version of the House Agriculture Committee’s [Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024](#) (commonly known as the Farm Bill). The bill includes the Agricultural Biotechnology Coordination Act, which would coordinate biotechnology activities across the USDA. New USDA Centers for Excellence focusing on biotechnology and biosecurity, along with

reauthorization of USDA programs focused on genetic resources, genomics, and phenomics, will help fill knowledge gaps and contribute biotechnology-driven solutions in agriculture and beyond. The bill also includes provisions from the NSCEB's Agriculture and National Security Act.

NSCEB Policy Options Included in House and Senate FY2025 NDAA Bills

Earlier this year, the NSCEB released a series of [policy options](#) that we urged lawmakers to include in the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to better prepare the Department of Defense (DoD) for biotechnology advancements. All six of the NSCEB's NDAA policy recommendations were represented in the bill passed by the House, thanks in large part to [Representative Khanna's leadership](#). In the Senate, the committee-passed bill includes five of the NSCEB's recommendations. These policy provisions would prepare the DoD to embrace biotechnology, expanding biotechnology capabilities for defense and strengthening the defense workforce and governance structure.

NSCEB Policy Options Included in House and Senate FY2025 IAA Planning

Congressmen Brad Wenstrup and Raja Krishnamoorthi [introduced](#) the Elevating Biotechnology Threats Reporting Act in May, which draws on two of the NSCEB's FY25 [Intelligence Authorization Act \(IAA\) policy options](#) for greater intelligence collection and analysis on biotechnology threats. This would enable the intelligence community to more comprehensively assess and report on biotechnology threats, a crucial improvement as the technology continues to evolve and mature. This bill was included as an amendment on the IAA ([H.R. 8512 Section 703](#)).

Biotechnology was also [mentioned](#) in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) public comments about their draft FY2025 IAA. [These provisions](#) draw on NSCEB policy options, including resourcing for biotechnology threat assessment and identifying structural challenges.

This recent legislative impact is a testament to the Commission's work and advocacy, as well as to the urgency of our mission. Our work will continue through 2026 as we strive to educate and expand on our recommendations to maintain and expand U.S. global leadership in biotechnology innovation.

About NSCEB: *The National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology is a legislative advisory Commission whose purpose is to advance and secure biotechnology, biomanufacturing, and associated technologies for U.S. national security and to prepare the United States for the age of biotechnology. The Commission submitted an interim report to the President and the Armed Services Committees in December 2023 and will publish a comprehensive report in early 2025, including recommendations for action by Congress and the Federal government. The bipartisan Commission is composed of twelve Commissioners with members from both the Senate and the House of Representatives as well as experts from industry, academia, and government. For more information about the Commission, visit <https://biotech.senate.gov>.*