



February 9, 2021

The Honorable Paul Tonko
Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment
and Climate Change
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David B. McKinley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment
and Climate Change
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Tonko, Ranking Member McKinley, Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) is pleased to submit a statement for the record to the to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change hearing entitled, "Back in Action: Restoring Federal Climate Leadership."¹

Introduction

BIO² represents 1,000 members in a biotech ecosystem with a central mission – to advance public policy that supports a wide range of companies and academic research centers that are working to apply biology and technology in the energy, agriculture, manufacturing, and health sectors to improve the lives of people and the health of the planet. BIO is committed to speaking up for the millions of families around the globe who depend upon our success. We will drive a revolution that aims to cure patients, protect our climate, and nourishes humanity.

Our members use technology to enhance cultivation and food production and produce sustainable biofuels, renewable chemicals, and biobased products, which provide a cost-competitive alternative to petroleum's value chain that also generates added value through economic development, job creation, and environmental and public health. Companies are utilizing biological processes to convert biomass and waste feedstocks into everyday products while creating new

¹ <https://energycommerce.house.gov/committee-activity/hearings/hearing-on-back-in-action-restoring-federal-climate-leadership>

² <https://www.bio.org/>

markets for agricultural crops, crop residues, and waste streams – in addition to contributing to a circular economy.

Fighting Climate Change Through Biotechnology Innovation

BIO applauds the Subcommittee for putting its immediate focus on the climate crisis. As we outline in our attached “100 Days of Innovation” Blueprint³, our nation is at a critical juncture. The start of the new administration and new Congress presents a unique opportunity to come together to galvanize our nation’s scientific and entrepreneurial capacity, to mobilize new waves of homegrown innovation and American ingenuity to tackle the climate crisis, end the pandemic, and get more Americans back to work.

To meet climate change commitments, it is crucial to lead with science and U.S. innovation. We must incentivize the adoption of innovative and sustainable technologies and practices and streamline and expedite regulatory pathways for breakthrough technology solutions. In doing so, the federal government can support pioneering technology breakthroughs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in manufacturing, transportation, and agricultural supply chains to build a stronger, more resilient, and environmentally sustainable economy.

BIO supports legislative action on climate change that catalyzes resilient and sustainable biobased economies. Federal climate policy should modernize infrastructure and manufacturing capacity to increase availability of biobased products. Climate legislation should seek to increase the use of biobased manufacturing, low-carbon fuels, and sustainable agricultural solutions to promote resilient and sustainable supply chains across economic sectors including translating sustainability to best practices to all bioindustries. If done right, climate legislation will drive adoption of market pull incentives for investment in and use of innovative technologies and products that fight climate change.⁴

In addition to climate legislation, BIO supports targeted executive actions to support innovation that can be taken immediately to jumpstart efforts to address climate change. In the attached letter addressed to President Joe Biden⁵, BIO put forward a series of recommendations that can be taken to address the climate crisis.

Conclusion

BIO is committed to working with the committee, congress, and the administration to address the climate crisis. We urge you to support policy that advances pioneering technology breakthroughs. With science we can return our Nation and the world to health and prosperity by taking bold and drastic action to address the climate crisis.

³ https://archive.bio.org/sites/default/files/docs/toolkit/BIO_100_Days_of_Innovation.pdf

⁴ <https://www.bio.org/strategic-vision>

⁵ <https://www.bio.org/letters-testimony-comments/bio-letter-biden-administration-climate-crisis>

100 DAYS OF INNOVATION

Our nation is at a critical juncture and how we approach the next 100 days will be essential in terms of ending the pandemic and rebuilding our economy in a way that is more resilient, more dynamic, and more inclusive. America remains the most vibrant and entrepreneurial nation in the world. We have been tested time and time again and have always emerged stronger and more united. As the new Administration and new Congress begin, there is a unique opportunity for the private and public sectors to come together to galvanize our nation's scientific and entrepreneurial capacity, to mobilize new waves of homegrown innovation and American ingenuity and to organize our country around the clear and bold mission of ending the pandemic and getting more American's back to work. To do that we must:

1

ENSURE A SPEEDY TRANSITION AND AN EXPEDITED SENATE CONFIRMATION PROCESS FOR AGENCY LEADERSHIP CRITICAL TO ADVANCING PUBLIC HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS.

2

REENGAGE AS A LEADER ON THE WORLD STAGE, INCLUDING REJOINING THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND THE PARIS CLIMATE ACCORDS.

3

DEVELOP AND APPROVE MORE VACCINES, THERAPEUTICS, AND DIAGNOSTICS TO PREVENT AND TREAT COVID-19

Specific Recommendations

- Provide increased R&D funding for a broad array of innovative technologies with the potential to fight COVID-19 and other emerging infectious diseases.
- Ensure ample funding to complete research priorities and procurement of existing vaccines and therapeutics.
- Expand government coordination mechanisms beyond the first wave of COVID-19 vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics.
- Encourage more public-private partnerships and private investment through sound public policy.
- Continue expedited EUA and full approval processes for existing and next wave of COVID vaccines and therapies.
- Ensure that companies can continue to partner with HHS, BARDA and DoD without regard to their current global supply chain.
- Increase funding for CDC surveillance activities to help evaluate the effectiveness of COVID vaccines and therapeutics and drive evidence-based decision making on development of updated or new medical countermeasures.

4 PROMOTE ROBUST AND EQUITABLE PATIENT ACCESS TO COVID-19 VACCINES, THERAPEUTICS, AND DIAGNOSTICS

Specific Recommendations

- Eliminate all patient cost-sharing across government and commercial insurance markets for COVID-related vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics, including for administration and ancillary services.
- Ensure state Medicaid programs cover all FDA-approved COVID-19 treatments and diagnostics, including those approved under an EUA, without delay and without prior authorization requirements.
- Cover COVID-19 treatment for the uninsured via Medicaid at 100% federal match.
- Ensure that provider relief funds and other similar assistance is targeted to providers who serve Medicaid, the uninsured, and other vulnerable patients.
- Expand and adequately fund the range of sites administering COVID-19 vaccines and treatments beyond acute care settings, including home infusion of therapeutics.
- Mount a coordinated and well-funded national campaign to build vaccine confidence and facilitate vaccination, particularly in minority communities and among essential workers.
- Develop a national vaccination plan to accelerate distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines in an equitable manner.
- Leverage federal research funding to diversify federal clinical trial networks and promote minority inclusion in COVID-19 trials.
- Encourage governors to expand the vaccine eligible populations to the ACIP recommendations expeditiously.

5 BETTER PREPARE FOR FUTURE INFECTIOUS DISEASE OUTBREAKS

Specific Recommendations

- Support a steady-state of public and private R&D on emerging infectious diseases by providing tax incentives for private investment in early-stage clinical R&D of medical countermeasures.
- Adequately fund and resource agencies engaged in biodefense and emergency preparedness such as ASPR, BARDA, USDA, and the CDC, so they have the infrastructure in place for immediate response and can improve long-term strategic preparedness planning.
- Enable the creation, maintenance, and utilization of advanced manufacturing capabilities domestically, particularly for biological products by incentivizing private investment in facilities and equipment, supporting initiatives for training a new and expanded workforce, and ensuring a clear regulatory pathway.
- Increase physical and virtual inventories of critical emergency supplies in the Strategic National Stockpile.
- Pursue a “One Health” coordination approach across the government that recognizes the interrelationship between human, animal, and environmental health.
- Rebuild and invest in the state and local public health infrastructure.

6

DRIVE ECONOMIC REVIVAL AND RESILIENCY THROUGH ADOPTION OF ADVANCED BIOTECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Specific Recommendations

- Develop streamlined and expedited regulatory pathways for breakthrough technology solutions to climate change and nutrition challenges.
- Expand support for scale-up of biorefineries and other biobased manufacturing.
- Incentivize the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and low-carbon fuels.
- Enforce requirements that Federal agencies should be purchasing biobased products — “Buy Green America.”
- Incentivize the use of existing or future COVID-19 relief and recovery funding to purchase biobased products to meet the demand for personal protection equipment (PPE), sterilizing and cleaning equipment and cleaning products, and with respect to broader efforts to “build back better.”
- In addition to these immediate actions, BIO calls on the federal government, working with state, local, and private sector partners, to conduct a comprehensive review of COVID outbreak and pandemic response to identify additional steps that could/should have been taken or that could improve the nation’s response and recovery in the future.

BIO’S PLEDGE

WORKING WITH OUR MEMBER COMPANIES AND OTHER PARTNERS, BIO WILL:

- Expand covidvaccinefacts.org to provide the public with easily understandable, transparent, and credible information about the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines and how they can obtain access to them.
- Facilitate cooperative agreements to expand manufacturing capabilities of vaccines to meet the demand.
- Promote continued diversity in COVID clinical trials.
- Always stand up for science.
- Highlight steps being taken by the Administration, Congress, and BIO’s member companies to resolve the COVID-19 pandemic in BIO’s public communication portals, meetings and events.



January 22, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

On behalf of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), the nearly 1000 companies, universities, and biotech organizations we represent comprised of millions of scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs, congratulations on your historic inauguration. BIO pledges to work with you and your Administration to advance the cause of truth and scientific innovation to address the four overlapping and compounding crises of the COVID-19 crisis, the resulting economic crisis, the climate crisis, and the racial equality crisis.

On the climate crisis, BIO applauds you for rejoining the Paris Agreement on your first day in office. As you begin to take immediate action in the first ten days of your administration to address the climate crisis, BIO urges the federal government to support pioneering technology breakthroughs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in manufacturing, transportation, and agricultural supply chains to build a stronger, more resilient, and environmentally sustainable economy. BIO recommends the following actions to address the climate crisis:

1. Leverage the Regulatory System to Quickly Deploy Climate-Positive Biotechnologies

Biotechnology is already contributing to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture, manufacturing, and transportation. Yet, it has the potential to yield significantly more environmental benefits if we leverage the regulatory system to quickly review and speed adoption of new technologies that can sustainably grow the economy and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We have seen the impact of this approach on innovative technologies like synthetic biology and gene editing, which have helped to mobilize COVID cures and therapies. To realize the full climate-positive potential of biotechnologies and products, the Biden Administration should:

- Direct agencies to expedite regulatory pathways for biotechnologies and products that advance environmental, animal, and public health goals.
- Ensure environmental regulation of manufacturing recognizes the environmental benefits of utilizing renewable chemicals throughout such processes.

2. Buy “Green”

Biobased manufacturing uses biology to convert agricultural and other renewable or waste feedstocks into everyday consumer products, thus reducing our dependence on petrochemicals and growing a green American economy that is more resilient and self-sustaining. A new approach to manufacturing will also help rebuild our national economy and workforce in a way that addresses climate change and enhances human health through improved air quality. To deploy biobased technologies and products and create more sustainable supply chains, we should take immediate steps to:

- Direct federal agencies and their contractors to buy biobased products.
- Redirect or reallocate available funds to existing federal programs to promote the use and consumption of biobased products.
- Encourage or incentivize the use of existing or future COVID-19 relief and recovery funding to purchase biobased products to meet the demand for personal protection equipment, sterilizing, and cleaning products, and with respect to broader efforts to “build back better.”

3. Deploy Sustainable Fuels

Liquid biofuels provide a readily available technology for reducing transportation air pollution and enabling value-added agriculture to be a key part of the solution to climate change. Supporting the production and deployment of sustainable fuels is essential to significantly reducing emissions in automobiles, planes, ships, and other forms of transportation, while also creating quality jobs across rural America. Specifically, the Biden Administration should:

- Cease issuance of Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) Small Refinery Exemptions to unqualified refineries.
- Build on the success of the RFS to develop and implement a Low Carbon Fuel Standard that is technology and feedstock neutral and ensures agriculture and biofuels are part of the solution to reducing emissions.
- Direct agencies to advance stalled pathways and facility registrations for advanced and cellulosic biofuel technologies.
- Instruct federal agencies and their contractors to purchase sustainable fuels in both ground and air transportation.

4. Regain America’s Global Leadership against Climate Change

The United States must reestablish its global leadership in the fight to halt climate change through increased engagement with international allies, and by re-joining international agreements to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Further, as the United States works with its allies to set new and ambitious climate agendas, it is imperative that biotechnology be treated and incentivized as a key solution to climate change and sustainable

development. Three critical actions to support U.S. global leadership on climate change are:

- Maintain American global leadership in innovation and broaden access to such innovations around the world, strengthen global rules on intellectual property, remove tariff and non-tariff barriers to the trade of biotechnology products, encourage regulatory harmonization, and enable the free flow of biological data across borders.
- Place biotechnology at the center of U.S. trade policy to achieve sustainability and address challenges like climate change through innovation and technology.

By proactively advancing biotechnology, we can take bold and drastic action to address the climate crisis. We join the Nation in optimism that your Administration marks a new opportunity for science to guide our response to the climate crisis and return our Nation and the world to health and prosperity.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. McMurry-Heath', with a stylized, flowing script.

Michelle McMurry-Heath
President and CEO
Biotechnology Innovation Organization