



Opening Statement of Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee Chairman Brian Babin

Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee Hearing
“Balancing Biotechnology Innovation and Biosecurity: Securing U.S. Leadership in a Global Race”
Wednesday, September 16, 2026

Thank you, Chairman McCormick, for holding this hearing on an issue with significant implications for our country.

Today, we are here to address a field that is increasingly consequential to our national security, economic competitiveness, and scientific leadership.

Biotechnology is a term that many of us hear frequently, but may not fully grasp just how many industries it touches. Biotechnology uses biological systems to develop products, processes, and solutions. As these technologies advance, the field is reaching into an expanding range of industries, including healthcare, agriculture, chemical manufacturing, fuel development, and even artificial intelligence.

Developments in biotechnology can provide tremendous benefits to our communities, industries, and economy. But these advances also present significant risks. Laboratory accidents, deliberate misuse, inadequate oversight, or the release of information or biological materials that could be used to harm the public pose serious threats to our national security and public health.

Maintaining leadership in this field therefore requires not only sustained support for research and development, but also strong and effective safeguards.

In May 2025, President Trump signed Executive Order 14292, *Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research*, which strengthened federal oversight of high-risk biological research, particularly dangerous gain-of-function research. The order seeks to distinguish legitimate and beneficial biological research from activities that could pose unacceptable risks to public health or national security.

Not every country—or every company operating within it—shares the same concerns about biosafety and biosecurity. That is one reason Congress enacted the BIOSECURE Act last December. The Act establishes restrictions on federal procurement and contracting involving equipment, services, or other capabilities provided by identified biotechnology companies of

concern. These actions are critical steps, but more work remains. We must continue developing policies, procedures, and oversight mechanisms that balance American leadership in biotechnology with the responsibility to protect our country from serious risks.

China is not standing still. The CCP is rapidly expanding its biotechnology capabilities. Its biomanufacturing capacity, research and development efforts, and workforce continue to grow. The United States must strengthen and expand our own capabilities—and move faster to stay ahead.

Biotechnology is one of the fastest-growing areas of scientific research and manufacturing. The United States must support this growth because it is critical to our economy, national security, and communities. We will only maintain our leadership in the face of strategic competition if we adopt policies that strengthen our domestic capabilities while protecting our research, resources, and people from bad actors.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about what more we can do to advance American biotechnology research, domestic biomanufacturing, supply chain security, and innovation while ensuring the United States remains competitive with China.

Thank you to our witnesses for being here today and for sharing your knowledge and expertise. And thank you again, Chairman McCormick, for holding this hearing.

I yield back.