

106TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 2106

A bill to increase internationally the exchange and availability of information regarding biotechnology and to coordinate a Federal strategy in order to advance the benefits of biotechnology, particularly in agriculture.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 24, 2000

Mr. ASHCROFT introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

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## A BILL

A bill to increase internationally the exchange and availability of information regarding biotechnology and to coordinate a Federal strategy in order to advance the benefits of biotechnology, particularly in agriculture.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This title may be cited as the “Advancing the Global  
5       Opportunities for Biotechnology in Agriculture Act of  
6       2000”.

7       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8       Congress makes the following findings:

1           (1) Biotechnology in the agricultural sector  
2 holds the prospect for substantial benefits to man-  
3 kind in a number of critical areas.

4           (2) Enhanced crop yields resulting from the use  
5 of agricultural biotechnology will help in feeding a  
6 growing world population, especially in developing  
7 countries.

8           (3) Healthier bio-engineered foods will assist in  
9 combating diseases specific to the developing world  
10 that arise from vitamin and other nutritional defi-  
11 ciencies.

12           (4) Pest and disease resistant crops developed  
13 through biotechnology will preserve and improve the  
14 environment by reducing the need for herbicides and  
15 pesticides.

16           (5) Greater agricultural yields will preserve the  
17 environment by minimizing the need for additional  
18 farmland to feed and clothe the world's growing pop-  
19 ulation.

20           (6) Ensuring that these benefits, the underlying  
21 scientific information, and the regulatory framework  
22 for managing this technology are shared globally is  
23 imperative and should be an integral part of United  
24 States foreign assistance programs.

1 **SEC. 3. INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds appropriated to  
3 carry out sections 103 through 106, and chapter 10 of  
4 part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 for fiscal  
5 years 2001–2002, \$6,000,000 is authorized to be appro-  
6 priated to the Agency for International Development for  
7 programs and projects designed to educate government of-  
8 ficials in developing countries regarding the use of bio-  
9 technology in the agricultural sector and the regulatory  
10 procedures used by the United States with respect to agri-  
11 cultural products using biotechnology. The programs and  
12 activities shall encourage acceptance by those countries of  
13 products approved under the United States regulatory sys-  
14 tem or, in the case of countries who choose to establish  
15 a national regulatory system based on science, to encour-  
16 age adoption of domestic approval processes based on ob-  
17 jective scientific principles. The programs and activities  
18 shall include the following:

19 (1) TECHNICAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR FOR-  
20 EIGN OFFICIALS.—The Agency for International De-  
21 velopment shall carry out a technical exchange pro-  
22 gram that brings to the United States appropriate  
23 foreign officials for the purpose of educating them  
24 about the scientific process underlying biotechnology  
25 and the regulatory approval system employed in the  
26 United States for biotechnology products, and to

1 seek answers to any questions they or their citizens  
2 may have regarding the safety of biotechnology, par-  
3 ticularly in agricultural products.

4 (2) TECHNICAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR  
5 UNITED STATES BIOTECHNOLOGY EXPERTS.—The  
6 Agency for International Development shall carry  
7 out a technical exchange program that sends United  
8 States experts in the field of biotechnology in the ag-  
9 riculture sector to foreign capitals to provide infor-  
10 mation on the scientific process underlying bio-  
11 technology, the regulatory approval system employed  
12 in the United States to approve agricultural prod-  
13 ucts produced with biotechnology, and to respond to  
14 any questions the officials in foreign countries or  
15 their citizens may have regarding the safety of bio-  
16 technology, particularly in the agriculture sector.

17 **SEC. 4. DEVELOPMENT OF EXPERTISE IN BIOTECHNOLOGY**  
18 **IN THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVEL-**  
19 **OPMENT.**

20 In order to carry out the programs and activities in  
21 section \_\_\_\_, the Agency for International Development  
22 shall establish a group of experts within the agency to  
23 carry out these programs. To maximize its effectiveness,  
24 this group should draw on the expertise, as appropriate,  
25 of regulatory officials in the Environmental Protection

1 Agency, the Food and Drug Administration, and the  
2 United States Department of Agriculture, as well as ap-  
3 propriate officials from the Department of State.

4 **SEC. 5. COORDINATED FEDERAL STRATEGY.**

5 (a) COORDINATION.—The President shall establish  
6 an interagency process for all relevant executive branch  
7 agencies, including the United States Department of Agri-  
8 culture, the Office of the United States Trade Representa-  
9 tive, the Department of State, the Agency for Inter-  
10 national Development, the Department of Commerce, the  
11 Food and Drug Administration, and the Environmental  
12 Protection Agency, to coordinate efforts and to generate  
13 support for the acceptance of agricultural biotechnology.  
14 United States policies must stress the prominence of  
15 science as the foundation for regulatory decision-making  
16 and work aggressively in international fora such as the  
17 World Trade Organization, the Organization for Economic  
18 Cooperation and Development, the World Health Organi-  
19 zation, including its CODEX Alimentarius, and the  
20 United Nations, to advocate for science-based decision  
21 making.

22 (b) STANDARDS FOR FOOD AID.—The Agency for  
23 International Development and the United States Depart-  
24 ment of Agriculture should work to ensure that all food  
25 and grain products that meet United States health and

1 safety requirements are acceptable to foreign countries  
2 under relevant food aid programs.

3 **SEC. 6. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.**

4       It is the Sense of the Congress that the Secretary  
5 of State should work with United States embassies abroad  
6 to develop bilateral support from foreign governments for  
7 the approval of science-based trading regimes in multilat-  
8 eral forums and organizations.

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