



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 'Michelle McMurry-Heath', written in a cursive style.

Michelle McMurry-Heath
President and CEO
Biotechnology Innovation Organization