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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. ____

To improve the biodetection functions of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. STRONG introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To improve the biodetection functions of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “DHS Biodetection Improvement Act”.

SEC. 2. DHS UTILIZATION OF DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL LABORATORIES AND SITES FOR CERTAIN BIODETECTION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT RELATING TO THE MISSIONS OF THE DHS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall conduct an assessment of how the Department of Homeland Security has utilized Department

of Energy national laboratories and sites regarding research and development in carrying out the missions of the Department of Homeland Security, in accordance with section 309 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 189).

(b) STRATEGY ON BIODETECTION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate the assessment required under subsection (a), together with a strategy for how the Department of Homeland Security will conduct research and development in coordination with Department of Energy national laboratories and sites to address biodetection research and development of the Department of Homeland Security, including the following:

(1) Identifying biodetection technologies that can, either individually or together, meet the biodetection mission needs as outlined in Department of Homeland Security capabilities analysis and requirements documents and informed by studies produced by the Comptroller General of the United States, such as the National Re-Assessment of the BioWatch Collector Network to Increase the Fraction of Population Covered, as developed by the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office of the Department in November 2021, and other such future studies as applicable.

(2) Developing an acquisition and procurement plan to acquire and provide, in accordance with Federal law, the Federal Acquisition Regulation, and Department of Homeland Security acquisition and procurement management directives, the biodetection technologies referred to in paragraph (1) to existing BioWatch jurisdictions.

(3) Conducting periodic external evaluations to identify gaps and potential failure points with respect to such biodetection technologies, and recommending contingency plans in the event such biodetection technologies do not perform as expected or intended.

(4) Assisting, as appropriate and in partnership with Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments, institutions of higher education (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), and the private sector, with the development of clearly defined program and technical requirements for future Department of

Homeland Security environmental biodetection programs, including any related transformational program of research and development.

(c) **REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate an update of the assessment and strategy required under this section, including any challenges to implementing such strategy.
