107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 2051

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 15 (legislative day, MAY 9), 2002
Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

AN ACT

To authorize the National Science Foundation to establish regional centers for the purpose of plant genome and gene expression research and development and international research partnerships for the advancement of plant biotechnology in the developing world.

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

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term ''Director'' means the Director of the National Science Foundation;

(2) the term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given such term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001); and

(3) the term ''nonprofit organization'' means a nonprofit research institute or a nonprofit association with experience and capability in plant biotechnology research as determined by the Director.

SEC. 2. MATCHING FUNDS.

The Director may establish matching fund requirements for grantees to receive grants under this Act.

SEC. 3. PLANT GENOME AND GENE EXPRESSION RESEARCH CENTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall award grants to consortia of institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations (or both) to establish regional plant genome and gene expression research centers. Grants shall be awarded under this section on a merit-reviewed, competitive basis. When making awards, the Director shall,

to the extent practicable, ensure that the program created by this section examines as many different agricultural environments as possible.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the centers established pursuant to subsection (a) shall be to conduct research in plant genomics and plant gene expression. A center's activities may include—

(1) basic plant genomics research and genomics applications, including those related to cultivation of crops in extreme environments and to cultivation of crops with reduced reliance on fertilizer;

(2) basic research that will contribute to the development or use of innovative plant-derived products;

(3) basic research on alternative uses for plants and plant materials, including the use of plants as renewable feedstock for alternative energy production and nonpetroleum-based industrial chemicals and precursors; and

(4) basic research and dissemination of information on the ecological and other consequences of genetically engineered plants.

SEC. 4. PARTNERSHIPS FOR PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) The Director shall award grants to institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, or consortia of such entities to establish research partnerships for supporting the development of plant biotechnology targeted to the needs of the developing world. The Director, by means of outreach, shall encourage inclusion of Historically Black Colleges or Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, or tribal colleges or universities in consortia that enter into such partnerships.

(2) In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, an institution of higher education or eligible nonprofit organization (or consortium thereof) shall enter into a partnership with one or more research institutions in one or more developing nations and may also include for-profit companies involved in plant biotechnology.

(3) Grants under this section shall be awarded on a merit-reviewed competitive basis.

(b) PURPOSE.—Grants awarded under this section shall be used for support of research in plant biotechnology targeted to the needs of the developing world. Such activities may include—

(1) basic genomic research on crops grown in the developing world;

(2) basic research in plant biotechnology that will advance and expedite the development of improved cultivars, including those that are pest-resistant, produce increased yield, reduce the need for fertilizers, or increase tolerance to stress;

(3) basic research that could lead to the development of technologies to produce pharmaceutical compounds such as vaccines and medications in plants that can be grown in the developing world; and

(4) research on the impact of plant biotechnology on the social, political, economic, and environmental conditions in countries in the developing world.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Science Foundation $9,000,000 for fiscal year 2002, $13,500,000 for fiscal year 2003, and $13,500,000 for fiscal year 2004 to carry out this Act.

Passed the House of Representatives May 14, 2002.

Attest: JEFF TRANDAHL,

Clerk.