

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 784

To direct the Secretary of Energy to establish microlabs to improve regional engagement with national laboratories.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 18, 2015

Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. GARDNER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Energy to establish microlabs to improve regional engagement with national laboratories.

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 Act may be cited as the “Microlab Technology
5 Commercialization Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) MICROLAB.—The term “microlab” means a
9 small laboratory established by the Secretary under
10 section 3.

1 (2) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term “na-
2 tional laboratory” means—

3 (A) a National Laboratory, as defined in
4 section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42
5 U.S.C. 15801); and

6 (B) a national security laboratory, as de-
7 fined in section 3281 of the National Nuclear
8 Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2471).

9 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
10 the Secretary of Energy.

11 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF MICROLAB PROGRAM.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in collaboration
13 with the directors of national laboratories, may establish
14 a microlab program under which the Secretary establishes
15 microlabs that are located in close proximity to national
16 laboratories and that are accessible to the public for the
17 purposes of—

18 (1) enhancing collaboration with regional re-
19 search groups, such as institutions of higher edu-
20 cation and industry groups;

21 (2) accelerating technology transfer from na-
22 tional laboratories to the marketplace; and

23 (3) promoting regional workforce development
24 through science, technology, engineering, and mathe-
25 matics (“STEM”) instruction and training.

1 (b) CRITERIA.—In determining the placement of
2 microlabs under subsection (a), the Secretary shall con-
3 sider—

4 (1) the commitment of a national laboratory to
5 establishing a microlab;

6 (2) the existence of a joint research institute or
7 a new facility that—

8 (A) is not on the main site of a national
9 laboratory;

10 (B) is in close proximity to a national lab-
11 oratory; and

12 (C) has the capability to house a microlab;

13 (3) whether employees of a national laboratory
14 and persons from academia, industry, and govern-
15 ment are available to be assigned to the microlab;
16 and

17 (4) cost-sharing or in-kind contributions from
18 State and local governments and private industry.

19 (c) TIMING.—If the Secretary, in collaboration with
20 the directors of national laboratories, elects to establish
21 a microlab program under this section, the Secretary, in
22 collaboration with the directors of national laboratories,
23 shall—

24 (1) not later than 60 days after the date of en-
25 actment of this Act, begin the process of deter-

1 mining the placement of microlabs under subsection
2 (a); and

3 (2) not later than 180 days after the date of
4 enactment of this Act, implement the microlab pro-
5 gram under this section.

6 **SEC. 4. REPORTS.**

7 (a) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after
8 the date of implementation of the microlab program under
9 section 3, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on
10 Armed Services of the Senate, the Committee on Armed
11 Services of the House of Representatives, the Committee
12 on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, and the
13 Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the
14 House of Representatives a report that provides an update
15 on the implementation of the microlab program under sec-
16 tion 3.

17 (b) PROGRESS REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after
18 the date of implementation of the microlab program under
19 section 3, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on
20 Armed Services of the Senate, the Committee on Armed
21 Services of the House of Representatives, the Committee
22 on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, and the
23 Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the
24 House of Representatives a report on the microlab pro-

1 gram under section 3, including findings and rec-
2 ommendations of the Secretary.

3 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
5 this Act \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2016.

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