

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3029

To provide for Department of Energy and National Aeronautics and Space Administration research and development coordination, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 22 (legislative day, OCTOBER 21), 2025

Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself and Mr. SCHIFF) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To provide for Department of Energy and National Aeronautics and Space Administration research and development coordination, and for other purposes.

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 “DOE and NASA Inter-
5 agency Research Coordination Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND NATIONAL AERO-**
2 **NAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION RE-**
3 **SEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINA-**
4 **TION.**

5 (a) AUTHORIZATION.—

6 (1) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of Energy (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (in this section referred to as the “Administrator”) may carry out, as practicable, cross-cutting and collaborative research and development activities to support the advancement of Department of Energy and National Aeronautics and Space Administration mission requirements and priorities.

16 (2) COMPETITIVE AWARDS.—The Secretary and the Administrator may make competitive awards, in accordance with subsection (e), to carry out the research and development activities described in paragraph (1).

21 (b) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall coordinate the activities under subsection (a) through 1 or more memoranda of understanding or other appropriate interagency agreements.

1 (c) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the activities
2 under subsection (a), the Secretary and the Administrator
3 may do the following:

4 (1) Conduct collaborative research and develop-
5 ment activities in a variety of focus areas, which
6 may include the following:

7 (A) Propulsion systems and components,
8 including nuclear thermal and nuclear electric
9 propulsion, radioisotope power systems, thermo-
10 electric generators, advanced nuclear fuels, and
11 heater units.

12 (B) Modeling and simulation, machine
13 learning, data assimilation, large scale data
14 analytics, and predictive analysis in order to op-
15 timize algorithms for mission-related purposes.

16 (C) Fundamental high energy physics, as-
17 trophysics, and cosmology, including the nature
18 of dark energy and dark matter, in accordance
19 with section 305 of the Department of Energy
20 Research and Innovation Act (42 U.S.C.
21 18643).

22 (D) Fundamental Earth and environ-
23 mental sciences, in accordance with section 306
24 of the Department of Energy Research and In-

novation Act (42 U.S.C. 18644) and section 60501 of title 51, United States Code.

(E) Quantum information sciences, including quantum computing and quantum network infrastructure, in accordance with sections 403 and 404 of the National Quantum Initiative Act (15 U.S.C. 8853 and 8854).

(F) Radiation health effects, in accordance with section 306 of the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act (42 U.S.C. 18644).

(G) Ground-based and space-based technology necessary for the transmission to the Earth's surface of solar energy collected in space.

(H) Arctic science and infrastructure resilience, including the monitoring of permafrost thaw, sea ice extent, wildfire dynamics, and other Earth system changes that affect energy systems, national security, and climate modeling.

(I) Wildfire mitigation and resilience methods to reduce wildfire risk and the severity of wildfire damages.

1 (J) Space weather forecasting and geo-
2 magnetic storm impact assessment, especially
3 as related to power grids, pipelines, communica-
4 tion systems, aviation, and satellite operations
5 in high-latitude regions.

6 (K) Satellite data acquisition, processing,
7 and distribution infrastructure (including high-
8 latitude ground stations and data centers) that
9 support Earth observation, synthetic aperture
10 radar data, and space mission telemetry.

11 (L) STEM workforce development and ex-
12 periential training programs, particularly in un-
13 derserved or remote regions such as the Arctic,
14 in fields relevant to agency missions, including
15 aerospace engineering, space physics, Earth
16 system modeling, and remote sensing.

17 (M) Any other area of potential research
18 and development collaboration the Secretary
19 and the Administrator consider important to
20 achieving agency missions and objectives.

21 (2) Develop methods to accommodate large vol-
22 untary data sets on space and aeronautical informa-
23 tion on high-performance computing systems with
24 variable quality and scale.

1 (3) Promote collaboration and data and infor-
2 mation sharing between the Department of Energy,
3 the National Aeronautics and Space Administration,
4 the National Laboratories (as defined in section 2 of
5 the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801)),
6 and other appropriate entities by providing the nec-
7 essary access and secure data and information
8 transfer capabilities.

9 (4) Support access by the National Aeronautics
10 and Space Administration to the research infrastruc-
11 ture and capabilities of the Department of Energy,
12 as practicable.

13 (d) AGREEMENTS.—In carrying out the activities
14 under subsection (a), the Secretary and the Administrator
15 may—

16 (1) carry out reimbursable and nonreimbursable
17 agreements between the Department of Energy and
18 the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;
19 and

20 (2) collaborate with other Federal agencies, as
21 appropriate.

22 (e) MERIT-REVIEW PROCESS.—The Secretary and
23 the Administrator shall ensure that any competitive award
24 made to carry out the activities under subsection (a) fol-

1 lows all appropriate laws and agency policies, including the
2 following:

3 (1) Selection by merit-review-based processes.

4 (2) Consideration of applications from Federal
5 agencies, the National Laboratories, institutions of
6 higher education, nonprofit institutions, and other
7 appropriate entities.

8 (f) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
9 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Ad-
10 ministrator shall submit to the Committee on Energy and
11 Natural Resources and the Committee on Commerce,
12 Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Com-
13 mittee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House
14 of Representatives a report detailing the following:

15 (1) Interagency research and development co-
16 ordination activities between the Department of En-
17 ergy and the National Aeronautics and Space Ad-
18 ministration carried out under this Act.

19 (2) The manner in which such coordination ac-
20 tivities expand the technical capabilities of the De-
21 partment of Energy and the National Aeronautics
22 and Space Administration.

23 (3) Collaborative research and development
24 achievements.

1 (4) Areas of future mutually beneficial activi-
 2 ties, including potential applications of clean energy
 3 technologies, such as marine energy, and collabo-
 4 rative initiatives to advance Arctic science, wildfire
 5 resilience, space weather resilience, and the STEM
 6 workforce pipeline in high-need regions.

7 (5) Continuation of coordination activities be-
 8 tween the Department of Energy and the National
 9 Aeronautics and Space Administration.

10 (g) RESEARCH SECURITY.—Any activity carried out
 11 under subsection (a) shall be applied in a manner con-
 12 sistent with subtitle D of title VI of the Research and De-
 13 velopment, Competition, and Innovation Act (enacted as
 14 division B of Public Law 117–167; 42 U.S.C. 19231 et
 15 seq.).

16 (h) AUTHORIZATION FOR TRANSFER TO NASA OF
 17 FUNDS FROM OTHER AGENCIES FOR SCIENTIFIC OR EN-
 18 GINEERING RESEARCH OR EDUCATION.—

19 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 20113(f) of title 51,
 20 United States Code, is amended—

21 (A) by striking “In the performance of its
 22 functions” and inserting the following:

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In the performance of its
 24 functions”; and

1 (B) by adding at the end the following new
2 paragraph:

3 “(2) TREATMENT.—Funds available to any de-
4 partment or agency of the Federal Government for
5 scientific or engineering research or education, or
6 the provision of facilities for such research or edu-
7 cation, shall, subject to the approval of the head of
8 such department or agency or as delegated pursuant
9 to a regulation of such department or agency, be
10 available for transfer, in whole or in part, to the Ad-
11 ministration exclusively for activities directly related
12 to space exploration and its associated science, tech-
13 nology, or engineering research or education activi-
14 ties. Funds so transferred shall be merged with the
15 appropriation to which transferred, except that such
16 transferred funds shall be limited to the awarding of
17 grants or cooperative agreements for scientific or en-
18 gineering research or education.”.

19 (2) ANNUAL INFORMATION ON FUNDS TRANS-
20 FERRED.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years
22 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
23 Administrator shall include in the budget jus-
24 tification materials of the National Aeronautics
25 and Space Administration submitted to Con-

1 gress in support of the budget of the President
2 submitted pursuant to section 1105 of title 31,
3 United States Code, information describing the
4 activities conducted under section 20113(f) of
5 title 51, United States Code, during the fiscal
6 year immediately preceding such submission.

7 (B) CONTENTS.—The information required
8 to be submitted under subparagraph (A) shall
9 contain a description of each transfer of funds
10 under the authority provided in section
11 20113(f)(2) of title 51, United States Code,
12 during the fiscal year immediately preceding
13 such submission, including the following:

14 (i) An identification of the department
15 or agency of the Federal Government from
16 which such funds were transferred.

17 (ii) The total amount of funds so
18 transferred, disaggregated by each such
19 department or agency.

20 (iii) The purposes for which such
21 funds were appropriated to each such
22 agency or department.

23 (iv) An identification of the program
24 or activity of the National Aeronautics and

1 Space Administration to which such funds
2 were made available by each such transfer.

3 (v) The purposes of each such Na-
4 tional Aeronautics and Space Administra-
5 tion program or activity, and the amount
6 of funding appropriated to the National
7 Aeronautics and Space Administration for
8 such purposes.

9 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the
10 date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator
11 shall submit to the Committee on Commerce,
12 Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the
13 Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the
14 House of Representatives a report that includes the
15 following:

16 (A) A summary of the value of the author-
17 ity provided in section 20113(f)(2) of title 51,
18 United States Code, including the extent to
19 which such authority has benefitted—

20 (i) the National Aeronautics and
21 Space Administration; and

22 (ii) the ability of the National Aero-
23 nautics and Space Administration to meet
24 its needs, achieve its missions, or more ef-
25 fectively conduct interagency collaborations

1 specifically in pursuit of space exploration
2 and related scientific and engineering ob-
3 jectives.

4 (B) An identification of any barriers or
5 challenges to implementing such authority, or
6 otherwise to managing the funding required to
7 conduct joint programs and award jointly fund-
8 ed grants and cooperative agreements by the
9 National Aeronautics and Space Administration
10 with other Federal departments and agencies so
11 as to contribute to the missions of each such
12 department and agency to advance the shared
13 objectives of space exploration and related re-
14 search and education.

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