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Background Press Call on President Biden's Executive Order to Launch a National Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing Initiative

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Via Teleconference

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MODERATOR: Hi, everyone. And thanks for joining us on a Sunday. The purpose of today's call will be to preview the President's executive order, which he'll sign tomorrow, that will launch a biotechnology and biomanufacturing initiative.

As a reminder, today's call is on-background, attributable to senior administration officials. We have a senior administration official on deck to discuss the details, beginning at 6:05 p.m. Eastern tomorrow, Monday, September 12.

For your awareness, not for your reporting, the speakers on today's call are [senior administration official] and [senior administration official].

With that, I will pass it off to [senior administration official].

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Thank you, [moderator]. And good afternoon, everyone.

We're excited today to share that, tomorrow, President Biden will sign an executive order to launch a national biotechnology and biomanufacturing initiative. The initiative will drive federal investments in areas that will define U.S. biotechnology leadership and our economic competitiveness in the coming decades. And this initiative will also help make our lives more prosperous and our planet more secure.

Last year, my staff has been and describe why the President is launching this initiative at this time.

So we know that the global industry is on the cusp of a revolution in biotechnology. Scientists, studies and facts suggest that before the end of the decade, engineering biology holds the potential to be used in manufacturing industries that account for more than one third of global output. That's equivalent to almost $30 trillion in terms of value.

Living factories — cells — and biomass can be used to make almost anything that we use in our day-to-day lives, from medicines to fuels to plastics. And this allows the U.S. to leverage innovation — this innovation — to strengthen our economy and security.

On Wednesday, the White House will host a summit on the biowconomy and biomanufacturing. We will announce new investments and resources across a wide range of agencies that will allow the United States to harness the full potential of biotechnology and biomanufacturing.

Let me give you just a highlight at a top level, and then I'll turn over to [senior administration official] of what the initiative will do.

The investments, programs, and partnerships in this initiative will advance research and development in engineering biology and biomanufacturing, expand and modernize domestic biomanufacturing capacity, and reinforce supply chains. This will help bring biopredators to market that will help support American farmers and reduce risk through biosecurity innovation, as well as enhance workforce training and education programs for the next generation of biotechnologists.

Now, beyond federal investments, the initiative takes on a series of actions to create more robust markets for bio-based products at home and globally to expand access to biotechnology and to accelerate research and development into vital products and service lines.

The initiative's focus will be on scaling. Tomorrow, it's going to be a — there will give a preview on the power of biotechnology and biomanufacturing to end cancer as we know it. But the power of biotechnology extends far beyond healthcare. It will enable us to reinvent America's supply chains, transitioning away from chemicals that rely on of towards more bio-based, safer, and more reliable alternatives that we make right here at home.

This transition will create jobs across all of America, and it will mean that we can keep prices for consumers low and supply chain resilient.

So these are the top lines at the high level. Let me now turn it over to my colleague for more information on the executive order itself.

Over to you.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Thanks very much, [senior administration official], and thanks to all of you for joining us on a Sunday afternoon.

So just to make a few points in addition to those that Raj has made on the initiative and some of the key elements of it.

So first is just to note for all of you that this initiative really delivers early on the vision and action called for in the CHIPS and Science Act, which, as many of you know, calls on the administration to develop a strategy to realize the promise of biotechnology and biomanufacturing for the American economy and for American national security. And we're doing that just under the passage of — the President signed it yesterday.

And then let me say a little bit about just some of the key elements of this initiative and the associated investments that [senior administration official] referenced earlier, and how they're going to drive advances in biotechnology and biomanufacturing.

So first is strengthening supply chains and lowering prices. You know, this is going to be through bio-based production of active pharmaceutical ingredients, biomanufacturing facilities that do not rely on foreign suppliers, and biomining of critical minerals. Consumers will be able to access products made in America at lower prices, even in times of global supply chain disruption.

Second, we're aiming to expand domestic biomanufacturing capacity so that more of what's invented in America is made in America. Biomanufacturing depends on a robust supply chain, and it will have an impact on communities throughout the country.

We're looking to facilitate more data sharing and data access to advance the development of biotechnology and the biowconomy with hope. The executive order will also human elements focused on reducing risk through biosecurity innovation, and we'll also — we'll also — we'll also —