

# Problem to Policy:

## How the Bayh-Dole Act Revolutionized Biotechnology



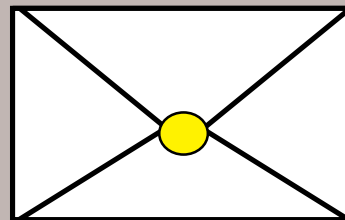
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From the papers of the Robert & Elizabeth Dole Archive & Special Collections



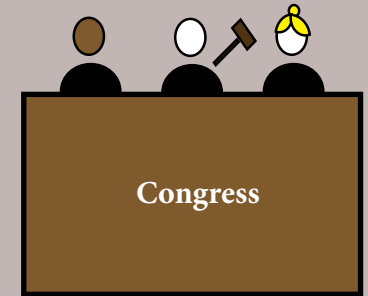
### Identify a Problem

In 1980, fewer than 4% of the approximately 28,000 patents held by the federal government were licensed to industry to develop commercial products.



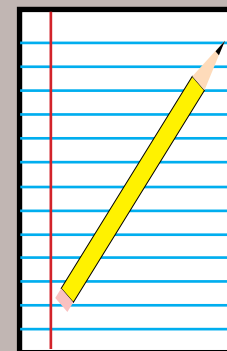
### Petition Elected Officials

The technology transfer manager at a large research university informed Sen. Birch Bayh that the university found several important discoveries that couldn't be patented due to inconsistent government rules and red tape.



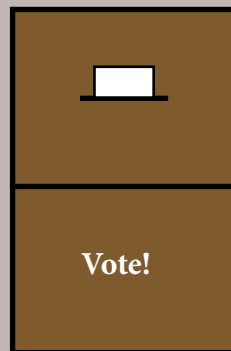
### Congress Investigates

As chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution, Sen. Bayh held hearings regarding patent laws.



### Draft a Bill

Sen. Bayh and Sen. Bob Dole drafted the *University and Small Business Patent Procedure Act* to make publicly funded discoveries patentable and commercialized. This later became known as the Bayh-Dole Act.



### Congress Votes

The 96<sup>th</sup> Congress debated the Bayh-Dole Act, along with two competing bills. After multiple votes in both House and Senate, Congress passed this legislation in 1980.

### Effects

The Bayh-Dole Act sparked commercialization of discoveries made in publicly funded laboratories. By 2002, there were 15 times more university patents than before the Bayh-Dole Act. The law is credited with the explosive growth of the biotechnology industry, leading to new drugs and treatments of diseases.

**Congressional legislation affects STEM research and the public.  
How? Find out in the Dole Archives!**