

AMERICAN ROBOTIC IDENTIFICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Complementary federal bill to the American Productive Capacity Authority Act
Drafted 2026-06-26

UNITED STATES CONGRESS

119th Congress, 2nd Session

2026

H.R. ____

S. ____

BY _____ (Introduced by request)

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL ROBOTIC IDENTIFICATION NUMBER FOR EVERY HUMANOID ROBOT MANUFACTURED IN OR IMPORTED INTO THE UNITED STATES, A PERMANENT PHYSICAL MARKING AND A REAL-TIME ELECTRONIC BROADCAST OF THAT NUMBER, A NATIONAL ROBOTIC IDENTIFICATION REGISTRY LINKING EACH NUMBER TO A RESPONSIBLE PERSON OF RECORD, AND PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO MARK, REMOVAL OR FALSIFICATION OF A MARKING, OR OPERATION OF AN UNIDENTIFIED HUMANOID ROBOT.

LONG TITLE

AN ACT to require that every humanoid robot manufactured in or imported into the United States bear a National Robotic Identification Number under a structured alphanumeric standard modeled on the Vehicle Identification Number and ISO 3779; to require a permanent, tamper-evident physical marking and a real-time electronic broadcast of that number modeled on the Federal Aviation Administration remote identification standard at 14 CFR Part 89; to establish a National Robotic Identification Registry within the Department of Commerce, with technical standards set by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, linking each National Robotic Identification Number to a responsible person of record on the model of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration vehicle registry; to declare that the National Robotic Identification Number identifies a productive instrument and not a legal person and confers no right, personhood, or standing on the machine it identifies; to coordinate with the American Productive Capacity Authority so that every Civic Robot Corps unit and every Personal Productive Asset distributed under that authority is assigned a number at manufacture; to protect the civil liberties of the public by limiting the identification system to the machine and its person of record; to provide civil penalties; and to provide effective dates.

LEGISLATIVE ROUTING NOTE

FILING PROCEDURE: This Act shall be filed with companion bills in the House of Representatives and the United States Senate and referred to the appropriate standing committees.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT:

House of Representatives:

- Committee on Energy and Commerce (device identification, interstate commerce)
- Committee on Science, Space, and Technology (NIST standards, robotics)
- Committee on the Judiciary (non-personhood declaration, civil liberties)

Senate:

- Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
- Committee on the Judiciary

FISCAL IMPACT: The Congressional Budget Office shall prepare a fiscal impact statement pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 602. This Act authorizes appropriations for the establishment and operation of the National Robotic Identification Registry and directs the Secretary of Commerce to set, by regulation, a cost-recovery fee schedule for number assignment sufficient to make the Registry self-funded after initial standup, on the model of cost-recovery registration fees.

CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS: Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (regulation of commerce among the several States) and Clause 18 (necessary and proper). The mandatory marking and identification of a manufactured machine in interstate commerce is the same authority Congress has long exercised over the Vehicle Identification Number and the remote identification of unmanned aircraft.

LEGISLATIVE DECLARATION

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

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE

(I) ON THE WORD "ROBOT" AND WHAT IS BEING IDENTIFIED. The word "robot" entered English from the 1920 Czech play "R.U.R." by Karel Capek, from the root "robota", meaning assigned labor. A robot is a constructed machine that performs physical labor on behalf of a human being. It is a productive instrument. It is not a person. This Act identifies the instrument so that a person remains answerable for it.

(II) IDENTIFICATION IS ACCOUNTABILITY, NOT PERSONHOOD. The Congress finds that the first duty owed to the public by any powerful machine placed among them is that the machine be identifiable, and that a human being be answerable for what it does. A car carries a Vehicle Identification Number. A drone broadcasts its identity. A humanoid robot, which moves through homes, schools, workplaces, and public spaces on two legs and at human scale, shall be no less identifiable than a car or a drone, and a responsible person of record shall always be answerable for it.

(III) THE MACHINE IS NOT A PERSON. The Congress finds and declares that the National Robotic Identification Number established by this Act is the identifier of an asset and confers no right, no personhood, no citizenship, and no legal standing upon the machine. A person of the United States carries a Social Security Number. A machine carries a National Robotic Identification Number. The Congress establishes the second system precisely so that it is never confused with the first.

SECTION 1. Legislative findings.

The Congress hereby finds as follows:

- (1) THE VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER PRECEDENT. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration administers a uniform vehicle identification standard at 49 CFR Part 565, and 49 U.S.C. Chapter 331 makes the removal or falsification of a Vehicle Identification Number a federal offense. Since 1981 the VIN has been a seventeen-character alphanumeric code, governed internationally by ISO 3779, with a manufacturer block, a descriptor block carrying a check character, and a serial block, and it excludes the letters I, O, and Q. A federally mandated, permanent, structured, machine-readable identifier for a manufactured machine is therefore ordinary, constitutional, and proven at the scale of hundreds of millions of units.
- (2) THE REMOTE IDENTIFICATION PRECEDENT. Under 14 CFR Part 89, an unmanned aircraft in the National Airspace System must broadcast a remote identification message keyed to a manufacturer serial number and a registration under 14 CFR Parts 47 and 48. A federally mandated machine may therefore be required to announce its identity in real time and to be tied to a registered responsible party.
- (3) THE EQUIPMENT AUTHORIZATION PRECEDENT. Under 47 CFR Part 2, a radio-frequency device on the United States market carries an FCC identifier tied to an authorized grantee. A device class may be conditioned on a federal grantee-keyed identifier.
- (4) THE PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY OCCASION. The American Productive Capacity Authority is authorized to manufacture and distribute humanoid productive assets to citizens at national scale under Section 17A and Section 19A of the American Productive Capacity Authority Act. The same statute that places a humanoid machine in millions of American homes must guarantee that each such machine is identifiable and that a person remains answerable for it. This Act supplies that guarantee for every humanoid robot, whether produced by the Authority or by any other manufacturer or

importer.

(5) THE PERSON-MACHINE DISTINCTION. The Social Security Act of 1935 created a national identifier for a person. The deliberate refusal of this Act to extend that system, or any person-identifier, to a machine is itself a finding: the dignity of the citizen requires that the citizen never be numbered in the same system as a tool.

SECTION 2. Definitions.

In this Act:

(a) "HUMANOID ROBOT" means a physical machine that perceives its surroundings, accepts instruction, and performs physical labor, and that has a body plan approximating the human form, including an upright or bipedal locomotion system or two or more manipulating limbs at human scale. The Registrar may extend the marking requirement by regulation to other mobile autonomous robots where necessary to prevent evasion by trivial change of form.

(b) "NATIONAL ROBOTIC IDENTIFICATION NUMBER" or "NRIN" means the structured alphanumeric identifier established under Section 3.

(c) "REGISTRAR" means the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the National Robotic Identification Registry established under Section 6, with technical standards set by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(d) "PERSON OF RECORD" means the natural person or the legal entity registered under Section 7 as responsible for a given humanoid robot.

(e) "MANUFACTURER" includes any person who manufactures a humanoid robot in the United States, and "IMPORTER" includes any person who imports a humanoid robot into the United States for sale, lease, or deployment.

SECTION 3. The National Robotic Identification Number.

(a) **STRUCTURE.** The NRIN shall be a seventeen-character alphanumeric code, modeled on ISO 3779 and the Vehicle Identification Number, structured as follows:

- (1) Characters 1 through 3: an Originator Identifier assigned by the Registrar to each registered manufacturer or importer.
- (2) Character 4: a form-factor code, with the value "H" reserved for humanoid robots.
- (3) Characters 5 and 6: a capability-class tier set by NIST standard.
- (4) Character 7: a check character computed from the other sixteen by a weighted-modulus method published by NIST.
- (5) Characters 8 and 9: the year and facility of manufacture.
- (6) Characters 10 through 17: a unit serial unique within the Originator Identifier.

(b) **PERMITTED CHARACTERS.** The NRIN shall use the digits 0 through 9 and the letters of the English alphabet excluding I, O, and Q. No two humanoid robots shall ever bear the same NRIN.

SECTION 4. Mandatory assignment.

No humanoid robot shall be sold, leased, deployed, or operated in the United States unless a National Robotic Identification Number has been assigned to it. The manufacturer shall obtain and assign the NRIN before first sale or deployment, and the importer shall obtain and assign the NRIN before the humanoid robot clears customs.

SECTION 5. Permanent marking and electronic broadcast.

(a) PHYSICAL MARKING. Every humanoid robot shall bear its NRIN as a permanent, tamper-evident, human-readable and machine-readable physical marking, affixed to a durable structural location specified by NIST standard, on the model of the Vehicle Identification Number plate.

(b) ELECTRONIC BROADCAST. Every humanoid robot, when powered and operating, shall broadcast a standard electronic identification message containing its NRIN, on the model of the remote identification of unmanned aircraft under 14 CFR Part 89, in a form that an authorized reader can receive at a reasonable distance. The broadcast shall identify the machine. It shall not transmit any biometric or personal information about any member of the public.

SECTION 6. The National Robotic Identification Registry.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.** There is established within the Department of Commerce a National Robotic Identification Registry, administered by the Registrar, which shall assign Originator Identifiers, record every NRIN, and maintain the link between each NRIN and its person of record.

(b) **STANDARDS.** The National Institute of Standards and Technology shall publish the NRIN field definitions, the check-character method, the physical-marking specification, and the electronic-broadcast message standard, and shall revise them as technology develops.

(c) **SELF-FUNDING.** The Registrar shall set a cost-recovery fee for number assignment sufficient to make the Registry self-funded after initial startup.

SECTION 7. Person of record and accountability.

(a) LINKAGE. The Registry shall link each NRIN to a person of record, on the model of the vehicle registry maintained for the Vehicle Identification Number. On transfer of a humanoid robot, the person of record shall be updated.

(b) ACCOUNTABILITY. The person of record is the party answerable to law for the acts of the humanoid robot, and the NRIN is the means by which a humanoid robot involved in an incident, a recall, or a violation of law is traced to that person. Nothing in this Act displaces the liability of a manufacturer for a defect.

SECTION 8. Non-personhood; civil liberties.

(a) NON-PERSONHOOD. The NRIN identifies a productive instrument. It confers no right, no personhood, no citizenship, and no legal standing on the machine. No provision of law conferring a right or a status on a person shall be construed to reach a humanoid robot by reason of its possession of an NRIN.

(b) SEPARATION FROM PERSON-IDENTIFIERS. No NRIN shall incorporate, encode, or be derived from any person's Social Security Number or other person-identifier. The person-of-record record under Section 7 is the only permitted link between a machine and a person, and it is held under the privacy protections that govern the vehicle registry.

(c) NOT A SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM. The identification system established by this Act exists to identify machines and to hold a person answerable for them. It shall not be used as a means of surveilling the public, and the electronic broadcast under Section 5 shall carry no information about any person other than the existence of the person-of-record record retrievable by lawful process.

SECTION 9. Coordination with the American Productive Capacity Authority.

The American Productive Capacity Authority shall assign an NRIN to every Civic Robot Corps unit and to every Personal Productive Asset it manufactures or distributes under Section 17A and Section 19A of the American Productive Capacity Authority Act, at the time of manufacture, and shall record the receiving citizen or unit as the person of record. A State-level Productive Capacity Authority shall do the same for the units it distributes.

SECTION 10. Enforcement.

(a) CIVIL PENALTIES. The Registrar may impose a civil penalty for the sale, lease, deployment, or operation of a humanoid robot without an assigned NRIN, for the removal, alteration, or falsification of an NRIN marking, for the broadcast of a false NRIN, and for the operation of a humanoid robot with a disabled electronic broadcast.

(b) FALSIFICATION. The removal, alteration, or falsification of an NRIN marking with intent to deceive shall be subject to the same character of penalty that 49 U.S.C. Chapter 331 applies to the falsification of a Vehicle Identification Number.

SECTION 11. Effective dates.

(a) **STANDARDS.** The National Institute of Standards and Technology shall publish the NRIN standards not later than one year after the date of enactment.

(b) **NEW UNITS.** The marking and broadcast requirements shall apply to every humanoid robot manufactured in or imported into the United States on or after the date two years after the date of enactment.

(c) **EXISTING UNITS.** A humanoid robot in service before that date shall be assigned an NRIN and marked on a schedule set by the Registrar, not later than four years after the date of enactment.

(d) **REVIEW.** The Registrar shall report to the Congress on the operation of this Act five years after the date of enactment, including any recommendation to extend the marking requirement to other classes of robot.

END OF ACT