

INFORMAL COALITION ON BIODEFENSE AND PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS

May 22, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate HELP Committee
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate HELP Committee
648 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard M. Burr
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Casey
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, and Senators Burr and Casey:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, who have joined together as an informal coalition on biodefense and public health preparedness, we write in support of S. 2852, the *Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act of 2018* (PAHPAI). We thank you for your bipartisan commitment to a timely reauthorization of the *Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act* and support the bill's further advancement with increased funding levels for key programs. The programs reauthorized by PAHPAI have been critical to the nation's preparedness and response for all populations to threats both naturally-occurring—like Ebola and pandemic influenza—and deliberate, such as a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) attacks.

We particularly appreciate the steps that PAHPAI takes to improve state and local public health security. State and local public health departments and laboratories are on the front lines in the prevention, detection, response, mitigation, and recovery from the range of CBRN threats and are dependent upon grants to support their capacity. PAHPAI reauthorizes and strengthens the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which supports the work of health departments to prepare for and respond to all types of disasters. Further, PAHPAI reauthorizes the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) at the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, which is critically important to preparing the healthcare delivery system to respond to and recover from a disaster.

By reauthorizing the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), and the Special Reserve Fund (SRF), PAHPAI strives to ensure that in the event of an emergency, Americans will have access to medical countermeasures (MCMs) that will protect their health and save lives. The SNS is critical to maintaining a supply of MCMs and medical supplies for the nation and to building the logistical capacity to distribute these products during an event. BARDA plays an important role in partnering with biopharmaceutical companies to support advanced research and development of life-saving MCMs for both man-made and naturally occurring threats. BARDA has been highly successful in bringing products to fruition for which there has been little commercial market. The SRF ensures that there is funding to purchase the MCMs needed to fill our preparedness gaps and represents the only market for many MCMs.

As PAHPAI moves forward, we recommend the Committee increase authorized funding levels for all programs described above so that they are better able to achieve their respective missions.

As an informal coalition, we support a standing rapid response fund to provide bridge funding between base preparedness funding and supplemental appropriations for acute emergencies and emerging threats. We appreciate that PAHPAI strengthens existing authorities for the Public Health Emergency Fund (PHEF) but urge Congress to create a mechanism to fund and replenish the PHEF. Without sufficient, dedicated funding, it will be impossible to quickly access funds when needed. Further, it is important that the PHEF does not transfer money away from existing public health and preparedness resources, but rather supplements these important programs.

Thank you for your commitment to our nation's preparedness. We look forward to working with you to advance this legislation. If you should have any questions, please contact any of the following individuals:

- Phyllis Arthur, Biotechnology Innovation Organization (202-962-6664, parthur@bio.org)
- Laura Hanen, National Association of County and City Health Officials (202.507.4255, lhnen@naccho.org)
- Tamar Magarik Haro, American Academy of Pediatrics (202-347-8600, tharo@aap.org)
- Austin Harrison, Alliance for Biosecurity (202-457-6331, austin.harrison@squirepb.com)
- Dara Lieberman, Trust for America's Health (202-864-5942, dlieberman@tfah.org).

Signed,

*Alliance for Biosecurity
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
American Clinical Laboratory Association
American Public Health Association
American Society for Microbiology
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of State and Territorial Health
Officials
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
California Life Sciences Association*

*Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Healthcare Ready
International Association of Emergency
Managers, U.S. Council
International Safety Equipment Association
Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security
March of Dimes
National Association of County and City Health
Officials
National Association of State EMS Officials
National Environmental Health Association
Trust for America's Health*