

January 11, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing public health, healthcare providers, environmental health, biotechnology innovators, and researchers, we are writing to encourage you to quickly pass the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness & Advancing Innovation Act (PAHPAI, H.R. 269), which overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives. The Health Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) and Energy & Commerce Committees have made tremendous, bipartisan progress on this important legislation, and it would be a setback for our national health security to further delay reauthorization.

The recent wildfires, hurricanes and multistate outbreaks have demonstrated that all sectors – public health, healthcare and private sector – play a critical role in saving lives during disasters and outbreaks. PAHPA is the backbone of our nation’s health security, providing the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with authorities for preparing the healthcare and public health systems for disasters and strengthening the medical countermeasures enterprise. The legislation addresses some gaps we have seen in recent responses, such as the speed of funding for public health emergencies, development and deployment of medical countermeasures for significant threats and preparedness for children in disasters.

We are particularly concerned that several authorities have expired, including temporary reassignment of state and local personnel, the National Advisory Committee on Children and Disasters limited antitrust exemption and other provisions critical to HHS contracting. We believe that time is of the essence in reauthorizing these important authorities.

We commend the work of the committed Senators, Representatives and their staff who have devoted considerable thought to this legislation. Our organizations are committed to our nation’s health security, and we remain ready to assist in order to see this legislation enacted into law as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

AABB (formerly known as American Association of Blood Banks)
Access Clinic
AFSCME
Alliance for Biosecurity
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
American Hospital Association

American Public Health Association
American Society for Microbiology
America's Blood Centers
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC)
Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)
California Life Sciences Association – CLSA
Central Ohio Trauma System
Chicago Department of Public Health
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Federation of American Hospitals
Healthcare Leadership Council
Healthcare Ready
Health Industry Distributors Association (HIDA)
Infectious Diseases Society of America
International Safety Equipment Association (ISEA)
Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
March of Dimes
Mary Rutan Hospital
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Environmental Health Association
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
TB Alliance
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America
Trust for America's Health
Washington State Department of Health
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition

cc: Chairman Lamar Alexander, HELP Committee
Chairman Frank Pallone, Energy & Commerce Committee
Ranking Member Patty Murray, HELP Committee
Ranking Member Greg Walden, Energy & Commerce Committee
Senator Richard Burr
Senator Bob Casey
Representative Susan W. Brooks
Representative Anna Eshoo