



February 7, 2020

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
260 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the Alliance for Biosecurity (Alliance), I write to express support for an emergency supplemental appropriations measure to ensure that our nation is equipped with the resources necessary to support an aggressive and comprehensive government-wide response to the 2019 novel Coronavirus.

The Alliance is hopeful that President Trump and his Administration will transmit to Congress – on an expedited basis – a request for emergency funding to cover a wide array of items, including significant investment in research, advanced development, and procurement of medical countermeasures (MCMs). The Alliance believes that providing supplemental appropriations is a better approach than transferring funds from other important programs and activities. Moreover, to the extent the Administration does seek to transfer funds from other programs to help cover the costs of its response to this public health crisis, the Alliance would highlight that establishing a Working Capital Fund could help achieve greater cost efficiencies across the administrative operations of the agency.

Moreover, as Congress prepares to receive the President's FY 2021 Budget Request – and hopefully, a request for emergency funding to respond to the 2019 novel Coronavirus – the Alliance urges lawmakers remember that public health emergencies like this one are unpredictable and, thus, difficult to prepare for and respond to. As such, with the FY 2021 budget and appropriations process underway, it is important to underscore the need for strong support and funding of those programs that are critical to advancing America's preparedness and response efforts, including Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), Project BIOShield Special Reserve Fund (SRF), and the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), among others. Moreover, in appropriating funds to these programs, the Alliance encourages out year inflationary and program increases based on technical advice from their respective officials to ensure the funding levels support the Public Health Emergency Countermeasures Enterprise (PHEMCE) Strategy and Implementation Plan. In comparing the FY 2020 enacted funding levels for each of these critical programs to the funding levels called for in the PHEMCE Strategy and Implementation Plan, it is clear that the programs are severely underfunded and likely do not have the resources necessary to meet their baseline needs.

Beyond providing the necessary funding for these programs to carry out their missions, the Alliance believes that more should be done to advance our nation's preparedness and response capabilities. For example, as demonstrated by the spread of the 2019 novel Coronavirus, emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) are emerging at a rapid rate. Unfortunately, the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) currently has no dedicated funding to address EIDs, so MCMs are often not available for immediate response when an EID outbreak occurs. As such, the Alliance urges Congress to create a separate EID budget line item that would allow the ASPR to regularly evaluate the EID landscape. This would likely generate a robust research and development pipeline of MCM candidates to be stockpiled and deployed during an EID emergency. Moreover, establishing a separate budget line item for EID would provide certainty

and reduce the ASPRs' dependence on supplemental appropriations in response to EID public health emergencies.

The Alliance also notes that infections caused by drug resistant pathogens are far more difficult and costlier to treat. Further, as you likely are aware, drug resistant pathogens are also a prime candidate for weaponization by our nation's enemies, both state and non-state actors. As such, the Alliance believes that there is an urgent need to take steps to reinvigorate the antimicrobial pipeline.

Finally, as you consider the appropriate response to this current public health emergency, the Alliance also urges you to consider ways to address another threat facing our nation: pandemic influenza. While pandemic influenza has been identified as a top national security threat by the U.S. government, it is also one of the most predictable threats we face as a nation. Nevertheless, over the last decade, Congress has largely been required to fund pandemic influenza preparedness through supplemental appropriations. In order to successfully prepare against a future flu pandemic, the Alliance asks Congress to authorize BARDA's pandemic influenza program, which is necessary to: (1) support research and development of new influenza technologies; (2) regularly test and evaluate rapid response capabilities for known and new pandemic threats; and (3) maintain influenza stockpiles of vaccine and therapies.

In conclusion, the Alliance very much appreciates your interest in, and support of, providing the resources necessary to respond to the 2019 novel Coronavirus. We also look forward to working with you as part of the FY 2021 budget and appropriations process to ensure that our government and its private sector partners – especially those in the MCM industry – are best prepared and positioned to respond to this and any future public health emergency.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Jack Kingston  
Squire Patton Boggs  
Secretariat, Alliance for Biosecurity

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*The Alliance for Biosecurity is a coalition of biopharmaceutical companies and laboratory/academic partners that promotes a strong public-private partnership to ensure medical countermeasures are available to protect public health and enhance national health security. The Alliance advocates for public policies and funding to support the rapid development, production, stockpiling, and distribution of critically needed medical countermeasures. Learn more online at [AllianceForBiosecurity.com](http://AllianceForBiosecurity.com).*