

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

WARREN GUNNELS, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
AMANDA LINCOLN, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

www.help.senate.gov

March 15, 2023

Dear Stakeholder:

As you likely know, the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) is due to be reauthorized prior to the end of this fiscal year. The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee seeks your input on policies that the Committee should consider during the reauthorization process.

To inform the Committee's work, we invite your input on the topics below, or other topics that are relevant but not mentioned. If you would like to do so, you are welcome to include proposed line edits to current law or other legislative text as a supplement to your narrative response.

Please submit comments to the Committee by email at PAHPA2023Comments@help.senate.gov no later than close of business on Wednesday, March 29, 2023.

Program Effectiveness

What specific changes could Congress make to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of current HHS programs and activities? Specifically:

Public Health Emergency Coordination and Policy

1. The responsibilities and authorities of the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) prior to or during a public health emergency (PHE)
2. The authorities, duties, and functions of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR)
3. The National Health Security Strategy (NHSS)
4. The National Advisory Committees on Children and Disasters, Seniors and Disasters and Individuals with Disabilities and Disasters

Medical Countermeasures Development and Deployment

1. The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)
2. The Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA)
3. Project BioShield
4. The Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasures Enterprise (PHEMCE) and related strategy, implementation plan, and budget plan
5. Emergency Use Authorizations and related authorities

6. The Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act
7. The Material Threat Medical Countermeasures Priority Review Voucher Program

Support for Jurisdictional Preparedness and Response Capacity

1. The Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Cooperative Agreements
2. The Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Cooperative Agreements
3. Other ASPR activities financed through the general HPP budget, such as the Regional Disaster Health Response System (RDHRS) demonstration projects
4. The National Disaster Medical System (NDMS)
5. The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)
6. The Emergency System for Advanced Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP)
7. Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Loan Repayment Program
8. The Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Cooperative Agreement Program and related activities, including mosquito abatement
9. Biosurveillance and Public Health Situational Awareness
10. Vaccine tracking and distribution
11. Policies for the inclusion of at-risk individuals in public health emergency preparedness and response activities

Gaps in Current Activities & Capabilities

1. What gaps do you see in the PAHPA framework, or how it has been implemented to date? (These gaps could be related to any of the programs noted above, or other aspects of the public health and medical preparedness and response ecosystem that are otherwise currently unaddressed.)
2. Additionally, aside from currently authorized programs and activities, what gaps exist in HHS' capabilities, and what types of activities or authorities are necessary for HHS to fulfill the intent of PAHPA and related laws?

Partnerships

What specific steps could Congress take to improve partnerships with states and localities, community-based organizations, and private sector and non-government stakeholders, such as hospitals and health care providers, on preparedness and response activities? For example:

1. How can these entities be better supported in appropriately engaging with the federal government to understand available resources, capabilities, and expectations prior to, during, and following a public health emergency?
2. How can foundational programs, such as the Public Health Emergency Preparedness cooperative agreements and the Hospital Preparedness Program, be improved to ensure state, local, and health system readiness to mount effective responses?

Thank you in advance for your feedback. We appreciate your input on this important matter and look forward to working with all of you throughout the PAHPA reauthorization process.

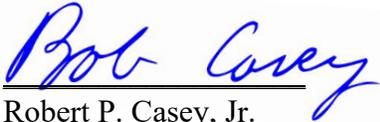
Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
Bernard Sanders
Chair
Senate HELP Committee



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Ranking Member
Senate HELP Committee



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
Member
Senate HELP Committee



Mitt Romney
Mitt Romney
Member
Senate HELP Committee