



Chairman Tom Cole

*Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

**FY 2016 Budget Hearing - Ebola
April 15, 2015
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Good morning. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education to discuss the Ebola supplemental funding provided in fiscal year 2015. We are looking forward to hearing the testimony from the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) Dr. Lurie, who I understand will provide an overview of the HHS Ebola response followed by Dr. Frieden of CDC, Dr. Fauci of NIH and Dr. Robinson of BARDA who will each describe the specific actions of their organizations related to Ebola.

These organizations make up the HHS portion of the Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasure Enterprise (PHEMCE) that addresses the medical countermeasure needs to protect our nation's people against threats as determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security.

This past September, the U.S. experienced its first domestic case of Ebola. To date, we have had 11 cases in the U.S. and unfortunately, two individuals have succumbed to the disease while under treatment in the U.S.

Unfortunately, our global friends in West Africa have experienced a much more tragic result. There, they have seen nearly 25,000 confirmed Ebola cases and over 10,000 deaths. Fortunately, the work of these countries, the global communities, and efforts from our witnesses' organizations—along with the \$2.7 billion of supplemental Ebola funding provided by Congress—is resulting in positive signs and developments over the past few months in West Africa. We certainly hope these positive trends continue and that we are finally turning the corner on this terrifying disease.

Before we get started with the hearing, I want to publicly thank all the front-line workers who have done so much to help stop this disease, relieve human suffering and protect others from Ebola. Everyone from local nurses and doctors, ambulance crews, state labs and public health officials, our military overseas and countless federal employees who have assisted with the Ebola effort deserve our gratitude for their tireless efforts. Thank you.

I look forward to discussing with you this morning the lessons learned from this outbreak, and how the funding Congress provided will support longer-term public health capacity. I also hope to increase our understanding on how the vaccine, therapeutics, advance development and the strategic national stockpile have supported the U.S. Ebola preparedness and response activities.

Today we welcome: Dr. Nicole Lurie, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, RADM, US Public Health Service; Dr. Thomas Frieden, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health; and Dr. Robin Robinson, Director, Biomedical Advanced

Research and Development Authority (BARDA), Deputy Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response.

Gentlemen, I look forward to your testimony and thank you for your work on this effort. I yield now to the Gentlelady from Connecticut for an opening statement.

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