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ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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November 10, 2014

Dr. Robin Robinson
Director
Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
2000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Robinson:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations on Thursday, October 16, 2014, to testify at the hearing entitled "Examining the U.S. Public Health Response to the Ebola Outbreak."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Monday, November 24, 2014. Your responses should be mailed to Brittany Havens, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to brittany.havens@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Tim Murphy
Chairman

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

cc: Diana DeGette, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Attachment

Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Michael C. Burgess

1. Can you describe what impact the Ebola outbreak has had on BARDA's advanced research and development budget?
2. Have you had to shift funding to Ebola projects from other previously planned programs?
3. Have development projects against other threats – like smallpox and anthrax – been shut down as a result?
 - a. If so, how costly will it be to start them up again?
4. What additional funds do you need to develop Ebola countermeasures?
5. When can Congress expect to hear from the Administration on how much additional funding is needed to deal with Ebola, domestically and abroad, beyond the current Continuing Resolution that expires in December 2014?
6. In 2006, the Department of Homeland Security determined hemorrhagic viruses, like Ebola, are material threats to the U.S. as potential bioweapons. In this case, the widespread availability of Ebola might present an increased security risk of a terrorist acquiring the virus for deliberate use. How does this Ebola risk compare to other identified threats, such as smallpox?

The Honorable Ben Ray Lujan

1. The appearance of a handful of Ebola cases in the United States demonstrates the importance of robust investments in our nation's public health infrastructure. Unfortunately, the National Institutes of Health's budget has been largely flat for years. In addition, we've seen cuts to the Center for Disease Control and the Department of Health and Human Services' Hospital Preparedness program. Can each of you discuss if budget cuts have had any impact on our response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa or impacted the handling of the cases here in the United States?

The Honorable Gene Green

1. Dr. Robinson, can you please tell us which U.S. agency or agencies are responsible for the development of vaccines and therapies to treat Ebola? Do you think sufficient resources are available to successfully develop these needed products?
2. As we know, the development of a medical countermeasure for a biological threat agent can take a decade or more, and a billion dollars, to develop. Ebola will be no different. The U.S. government research program on Ebola countermeasures goes back a decade. But the level of financial priority and urgency on getting these countermeasures developed and stockpiled was insufficient to prepare us for the situation we currently face. Most would agree we are

only aggressively pressing forward into clinical trials now because of the gravity of the situation. Approximately how much funding do you think is needed to invest in the development of Ebola vaccines and drugs, to give us the best chance of successfully developing one new vaccine and one new therapy?