

Additional Questions for the Record

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"Update on the U.S. Public Health Response to the Ebola Outbreak"

House Energy and Commerce Committee

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

November 18, 2014

The Honorable Ben Ray Lujan

- I. What's happening in West Africa is a tragedy. Recently, the World Health Organization announced that this unprecedented Ebola outbreak had claimed the lives of over 5,000 people and that more than 14,000 have been infected. Meanwhile, the public health infrastructure in these countries, which was already poor, is increasingly strained. The World Bank reports this outbreak could cost West Africa \$33 billion over the next two years.**

Clearly, we have a moral responsibility to address this crisis. But defeating Ebola at its source is also vital to ensuring the safety of the American people. The Administration has correctly asked for a robust funding package to address this crisis. It is my hope and expectation that Congress will act on this request quickly.

However, the current Ebola crisis also demonstrates the importance of robust investments in our nation's public health infrastructure and in our research and development institutions. In my home state of New Mexico, our National Laboratories have developed genetic sequencing, low cost rapid pathogen assays, and computer models for how diseases spread.

Can you speak to the present and future role the National Labs play in our response to the Ebola crisis and similar outbreaks? Do you expect any of the funding in this request to go to National Laboratories – either directly or through partnerships?

The Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) and its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have been working with the Department of Energy's National Laboratories during the Ebola response. For a further description of these efforts, please see ASPR's and CDC's responses to questions for the record.