

Alliance for Biosecurity

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The Honorable Susan Brooks
U.S. House of Representatives
1505 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo
U.S. House of Representatives
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

July 29, 2015

Dear Congresswomen Brooks and Eshoo:

On behalf of the Alliance for Biosecurity, we write today in strong support of your bill, the *Strengthening Public Health Emergency Response Act of 2015*. This bill would support preparedness for potential public health emergencies by increasing accountability and streamlining the contracting process for medical countermeasures (MCMs). Ensuring that these essential programs are sufficiently funded and effectively managed is critical to sustaining our national security.

Biosecurity companies tackle some very complex scientific puzzles, which are no less challenging than those faced by the biopharmaceutical sector as a whole but face a much more limited market. The medical countermeasures enterprise represents the government's commitment to develop and procure the products necessary to protect our national interests and encourage further innovation by the private sector. A combined and concerted effort among government agencies has greatly improved our preparedness capabilities over the last decade, but as these programs must evolve to ensure that they continue to function efficiently.

Given that MCMs are essential to our national security and that private sector partners play a critical role in their development, the contracting process must be expeditious. Government funded projects progress at a slower pace than privately funded ones due to unpredictable funding and a lengthy contracting process. This bill addresses this concern by taking steps to make the contracting process more transparent, predictable, and flexible and by removing the requirement that OMB review all contracts already approved and funded by HHS. These reforms will speed up the procurement process and facilitate the public private partnerships necessary for countermeasure development.

This bill also encourages private sector development of MCMs by including the 13 material threats identified by the Department of Homeland Security in the tropical disease Priority Review Voucher program. This model has proved successful in encouraging the development of vaccines and therapeutics for neglected tropical diseases and rare pediatric diseases and its application to MCMs for material threats is an important step toward ensuring necessary products are developed, approved, and stockpiled for use in a potential disease outbreak or chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) attack.

Bavarian-Nordic ▪ CUBRC, Inc. ▪ Elusys Therapeutics ▪ Emergent BioSolutions ▪ GlaxoSmithKline ▪ Meridian Medical Technologies, Inc., a Pfizer Company ▪ Nanotherapeutics, Inc. ▪ Neumedicines, Inc. ▪ Novartis Vaccines ▪ Romark Laboratories, Inc. ▪ Siga Technologies ▪ Soligenix, Inc. | Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute ▪ Texas A&M University System ▪ University of Texas Medical Branch

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Again, we thank you for your support of the programs that contribute to greater public health security and ensure preparedness against biological threats and appreciate your efforts to improve the effectiveness of these critical programs. The Alliance for Biosecurity stands ready to help you and your staff in any way possible. If you should have any questions please contact Maureen Hardwick (202-230-5133, Maureen.Hardwick@dbr.com) or Rebecca McGrath (202-230-5679, Rebecca.McGrath@dbr.com).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Posillico', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Elisabeth Posillico, President & CEO, Elusys Therapeutics, Inc.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Chaplin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Chaplin, President & CEO, Bavarian Nordic, A/S

Co-Chairs, Alliance for Biosecurity