

Statement of Representative Anna G. Eshoo
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Health Subcommittee Markup of H.R. 3299 and H.R. 921
2123 Rayburn House Office Building
June 7, 2016

In 2006, I introduced bipartisan legislation with my colleague Rep. Mike Rogers (R-MI) to establish the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA). BARDA continues to successfully provide an integrated, systematic approach to the development and purchase of the necessary vaccines, drugs, therapies, and diagnostic tools to protect the United States in public health medical emergencies.

Events over the past few years, including our recent experiences with Ebola, underscore the reality that our country is not yet adequately prepared to deal with potentially devastating biological crises. H.R. 3299 makes targeted updates to BARDA and the FDA to improve contract efficiencies, encourage the development of medical countermeasures, and increase the coordination of medical countermeasure stockpiling.

By streamlining the contracting process within BARDA and restoring BARDA's contracting authority to reflect Congress' original intent when it passed in PAHPA in 2006, we allow the Administration to be more nimble in preparing for and responding to a public health emergency.

We must also aggressively support the development of medical countermeasures which can take up to a decade and cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Without the promise of a government commitment to countermeasure development, our partners in the private sector will abandon much of their work on these critical lifesaving products.

I urge my colleagues to vote in support of H.R. 3299, the *Strengthening Public Health Emergency Response Act*.