

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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July 6, 2023

Dr. Gerald W. Parker, Jr., DVM, PhD
Associate Dean for Global One Health
Director for the Pandemic and Biosecurity Policy Program
Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
4461 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4461

Dear Dr. Parker:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Health on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, to testify at the hearing entitled "Legislative Solutions to Bolster Preparedness and Response for All Hazards and Public Health Security Threats."

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 and requests with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Thursday, July 20, 2023. Your responses should be mailed to Jolie Brochin, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to Jolie.Brochin@mail.house.gov.

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

Sincerely,



Brett Guthrie
Chair
Subcommittee on Health

cc: Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health

The Honorable Earl L. “Buddy” Carter

1. It was made clear during the pandemic that the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) was woefully unprepared to distribute life-saving medicines and supplies. Many stakeholders have proposed an American-made preference for drugs selected for procurement by the SNS. What steps can Congress take to ensure a resilient and fully equipped stockpile in the event of a future public health emergency? How can we in Congress encourage the use of public-private partnerships to accelerate the investment in our domestic supply chain and in turn the security of our Strategic National Stockpile?
2. A recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) study found that funding for “pandemic preparedness was generally insufficient, particularly in light of the major human and financial costs associated with global health crises similar to the COVID-19 pandemic.” Overall funding for preparedness and response follows a cycle of panic and neglect, where funds are appropriated during emergencies, but not continued once the crisis abates. As a result, capabilities gained and lessons learned are often lost, resulting in the need for more emergency spending when the next crisis arises. According to former SNS Director Greg Burel, the SNS has experienced “mission gallop” and was never “envisioned to be the first stop in response to pandemics and emerging infectious disease.” As Burel stated, “We wouldn’t expect the U.S. military to go into battle with half of its firepower.” From your perspective, how can ASPR and the SNS be better prepared for all potential threats – including maintaining domestic manufacturing capabilities, stockpiling new countermeasures, maintaining and replenishing the products already stockpiled?
3. The Pandemic-All-Hazards Preparedness Act is not just about preparing for emerging infectious diseases but ensuring our country is prepared to respond to a myriad of threats including bioterrorism. According to the unclassified version of the Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community released by the Director of National Intelligence this year, the lack of preparedness and response and questions around COVID origins and I quote, “may inspire some advisories to consider options related to the development of biological weapons.” The unclassified report calls out specifically China, Iran, North Korea and Russia.
 - Given your background and work with DOD and US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Disease whose mission is to “provide leading edge medical capabilities to deter and defend against current and emerging biological threat agents.” Do you believe that ASPR/BARDA are well equipped to prepare for and respond to a myriad of threats including biological weapons? If not, what more can be done?

[Dr. Parker did not answer submitted questions for the record by the time of publication.]