



## Coalition of U.S. One Health Partner Organizations

(3 Pages)

June 26, 2020

The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chairman  
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP)  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

On behalf of the informal Coalition of U.S. One Health partner organizations, we applaud the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) efforts to re-evaluate the nation's public health infrastructure and develop legislation to prepare for the next pandemic.

**The White Paper [“Planning for the Next Pandemic”](#) describes recent disease outbreaks, such as Zika, Ebola and Avian Influenza - all zoonotic diseases transmitted from animals.** This paper correctly reflects the threat our country is constantly facing, as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 3 out of every 4 new, or emerging human infectious diseases come from animals. **Recognizing that animal, human, and environmental health are inextricably linked, future pandemic legislation *must* direct and require coordination among federal agencies to achieve a level of preparedness that will safeguard public health and the food supply against infectious disease outbreaks.**

**The Coalition of U.S. One Health Partners recommends that the Senate HELP Committee pass the *Advancing Emergency Preparedness through One Health Act of 2019, (S. 1903/H.R. 3771)*, a bill that would direct the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop a coordinated One Health framework across the entire federal government. Such sustained and permanent inter-agency coordination will integrate and leverage federal assets at USDA, HHS, and other agencies to prepare for and prevent the next zoonotic disease outbreak. That urgently needed coordination would increase government economic efficiency by allowing collaborative projects and responses rather than each agency operating alone and often in a vacuum.**

As COVID-19 has taught us, jurisdictional silos of congressional committees, federal agencies or disciplines do not prepare us for emerging zoonotic disease outbreaks. Unfortunately, past pandemic legislation (<https://tinyurl.com/yb35an39>, pp.4 - 14) has failed to break down those silos to allow collaborative, joint oversight of human, animal, and ecological health. We urge the Senate HELP Committee and other relevant congressional committees, to “break” down these silos through legislation that directs inter-agency, multi-sectoral, and trans-disciplinary pandemic preparedness.

While there are small initiatives for such One Health coordination being led by individuals within multiple Federal agencies, including the CDC One Health office, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services' One Health Coordination Center, the FDA One Health Initiative and EPA One Health Community of Practice, sustained, inter-agency coordination necessary to prevent, prepare for, and respond to zoonotic disease outbreaks is not in place. **The U.S. was not and is not prepared!** As urged in the *National Blueprint for Biodefense: Leadership and Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts*, (<https://tinyurl.com/y6wofoha>), greater intergovernmental agency and public health coordination is required to achieve a “single, comprehensive, and harmonized strategy”.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a real-time case study of the importance and urgent need for such a coordinated One Health approach. Because veterinarians are highly trained experts practicing at the intersection of public health and animal health, they have significant experience with disease detection and eradication. Indeed, protecting public health is in the Veterinary Hippocratic Oath. **Veterinarians serve in a range of roles and agencies across the government and must be brought to the table as part of pandemic preparedness and response efforts.** Currently, USDA National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) veterinary laboratories are leading COVID-19 human testing in many states (<https://tinyurl.com/yb7hqjlr>) and veterinary researchers are among those working to develop a vaccine to protect people against COVID-19. Yet there is no structure in place to ensure animal health input in public health decision making. This *must* be corrected.

The coalition of U.S. One Health Partners agrees with this assessment and recommends pandemic legislation that directs the HHS and the USDA to develop a One Health framework for integrating departments, programs and activities in a government-wide approach to addressing infectious disease outbreaks as called for in the One Health Act of 2019. Developing this framework will help the federal government identify gaps in surveillance, diagnostics, medical treatments, and workforce preparedness, as well as the regulatory barriers that impede collaborations and economic efficiencies among agencies, not only in times of emergency, but in every day, normal operations.

Now, more than ever, after seeing the devastation of the current zoonotic disease pandemic, the federal government must adopt a coordinated, One Health framework to prepare for and respond to the next infectious disease outbreak. We urge the HELP Committee to embrace and approve the One Health Act of 2019 so it can proceed to the Senate Floor for a full vote.

Respectfully,

**The (*growing*) informal Coalition of U.S. One Health Partners**

***Academic Institutions***

Athens Drive Magnet High School, Center for  
Medical Sciences and Global Health  
Initiatives  
CTSA One Health Alliance  
Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at  
Tufts University  
Department of Environmental Science and  
Policy, George Mason University  
Kansas State University College of Veterinary  
Medicine  
Lincoln Memorial University College of  
Veterinary Medicine  
Michigan State University College of Veterinary  
Medicine  
Mississippi State University College of  
Veterinary Medicine  
National Institute of Antimicrobial Resistance  
Research and Education  
One Health at the University of Georgia  
(Students and Faculty)

One Health Institute, School of Veterinary  
Medicine, University of California, Davis  
Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine  
The Ohio State University Global One Health  
Initiative  
The Texas A&M University System  
University of Alaska, Fairbanks Center for One  
Health Research  
University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary  
Medicine

***Corporate***

Adtalem Global Education  
Aequor, Inc  
Global Prep, LLC  
La Jeune Consulting  
Paladium  
US Biologic, Inc.

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### ***Non-Profit Organizations***

AHEAD (Animal & Human Health for the Environment and Development)  
American Animal Hospital Association  
American Association of Avian Pathologists  
American Association of Equine Practitioners  
American Association of Feline Practitioners  
American Association of Food Safety and Public Health Veterinarians  
American Association of Industry Veterinarians  
American Association of Public Health Physicians  
American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners  
American Dental Education Association  
American Society of Laboratory Animal Practitioners  
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene  
American Veterinary Epidemiology Society  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
Association of Avian Veterinarians  
Consortium of Universities for Global Health  
EcoHealth Alliance  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
International Student One Health Alliance  
Louisiana One Health in Action  
MRIGlobal  
National Association of Federal Veterinarians  
National Environmental Health Association  
National Link Coalition (US)  
Ohio State Global One Health Initiative, LLC.  
One Health Academy  
One Health Commission  
One Health Initiative pro bono team  
One Health Organization (Ohio)  
Ovarian Cancer Symptom Awareness  
Pet Partners  
Saint Louis Institute for Conservation Medicine

### ***State Veterinary Medical Associations***

Alabama Veterinary Medicine Association  
Alaska State Veterinary Medical Association  
Arizona Veterinary Medical Association  
Arkansas Veterinary Medicine Association  
Delaware Veterinary Medicine Association  
District of Columbia Veterinary Medical Association  
Florida Veterinary Medicine Association  
Georgia Veterinary Medical Association  
Idaho Veterinary Medical Association  
Indiana Veterinary Medical Association  
Iowa Veterinary Medical Association  
Kansas Veterinary Medicine Association  
Maine Veterinary Medical Association  
Maryland Veterinary Medical Association  
Michigan Veterinary Medicine Association  
Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association  
Missouri Veterinary Medical Association  
Montana Veterinary Medical Association  
Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association  
Nevada Veterinary Medicine Association  
New Hampshire Veterinary Medicine Association  
New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association  
New Mexico Veterinary Medicine Association  
New York State Veterinary Medical Society  
North Carolina Veterinary Medical Association  
Ohio Veterinary Medical Association  
Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Association  
South Carolina Association of Veterinarians  
Tennessee Veterinary Medicine Association  
Vermont Veterinary Medical Association  
Virginia Veterinary Medical Association  
Washington State Veterinary Medical Association  
Wyoming Veterinary Medical Association

Updated June 26, 2020  
4:00 p.m.