

# Alliance for Biosecurity

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January 24, 2007

The Honorable David R. Obey  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Room H-218 Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128 Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-146A Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Obey, Chairman Byrd, Ranking Member Lewis, and Ranking Member Cochran:

On behalf of the Alliance for Biosecurity, we strongly urge you to provide adequate funding within the fiscal year 2007 "joint resolution" to allow the Department of Health and Human Services to fund the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) and implement fully its authorized functions and activities. This important new entity will play a vital role in protecting the United States and its citizens against the threat of bioterrorist attacks and naturally occurring pandemics.

The Alliance for Biosecurity is a collaboration between the Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, pharmaceutical companies, and biotechnology companies working to develop vaccines and medicines (medical countermeasures) for our nation's Strategic National Stockpile. The Alliance mission is to work in the public interest to promote a robust and sustainable research and development infrastructure necessary to prevent and treat the infectious disease threats that present security challenges in the 21st Century.

Our nation currently is vulnerable to severe and potentially devastating biothreats, such as anthrax and smallpox, in large part because our country does not have the vast majority of medical countermeasures needed to protect its citizens against these agents. With appropriate funding levels, BARDA can accomplish a number of important objectives that can facilitate advanced research and development of medical countermeasures as well as reinforce the nation's public health infrastructure and emergency preparedness.

The Appropriations Committees have recognized the importance of these activities. Both the House and Senate versions of the FY 2007 Labor, Health & Human Services, and Education Appropriations bills (H.R. 5647 / S. 3708) specifically set aside funding to support "activities related to the advanced development of biodefense countermeasures." Appropriating funding for BARDA in the FY 2007 "joint resolution" will permit the federal government to begin using these new tools that are necessary to manage the development of new medical countermeasures.

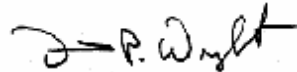
If Congress does not provide BARDA with the funding it needs to carry out its mission, the nation runs the risk of being unprepared to protect its citizens in the face of a bioterrorist attack or pandemic. Delaying the appropriation of funds until FY 2008 is not a sound option. To defer or postpone funding until FY 2008 will significantly set back the development of these crucial medicines and vaccines. Additionally, it may be catastrophic to many of the fledgling biotechnology firms currently devoting significant capital to the development of medical countermeasures in anticipation of forging a true partnership with the federal government. Appropriating adequate funds in FY 2007 will send a message to industry that the federal government is a serious partner in the endeavor to create medical countermeasures for the Strategic National Stockpile.

BARDA is authorized under Title IV of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (P.L. 109-417), which passed the House without objection and passed the Senate by unanimous consent in the final days of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. The legislation authorizes \$1.07 billion in funding for BARDA for FY 2006 through FY 2008. While we recognize that you have a difficult job in finalizing the FY 2007 appropriations, we firmly believe that failure to appropriate funding for BARDA and the Biodefense Medical Countermeasure Development Fund will seriously threaten our national security. We strongly urge you to appropriate funding for BARDA in the "joint resolution."


Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Alliance,



Susan Berger, Ph.D.  
Director of Science, Knowledge & Policy  
Pfizer Inc.  
Co-Chair, Alliance for Biosecurity



David P. Wright  
President & CEO  
PharmAthene  
Co-Chair, Alliance for Biosecurity



Tara O'Toole, MD  
CEO & Director, Center for Biosecurity  
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center  
Strategic Director, Alliance for Biosecurity

*copies to:*

The Honorable Joe Barton, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable John D. Dingell, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi, Ranking Member, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, U.S. Senate

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, U.S. Senate

Carol D. Linden, Acting Principal Deputy Director, Office of Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasures, Office of Public Health Emergency Preparedness, DHHS

Gerald Parker, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Health Emergency Preparedness, DHHS

William Raub, Science Advisor to the Secretary, DHHS

Stan Sokul, Acting Chief of Staff, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President

Craig Vanderwagen, Assistant Secretary for Public Health Emergency Preparedness, DHHS

Rajeev Venkayya, Special Assistant to the President for Biodefense, White House Homeland Security Council, Executive Office of the President