

# Alliance for Biosecurity

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March 5, 2009

The Honorable Dave Obey  
Chairman  
Labor, Health and Human Services, and  
Education Appropriations Subcommittee  
2358 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt  
Ranking Member  
Labor, Health and Human Services, and  
Education Appropriations Subcommittee  
2441 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

We are writing on behalf of the Alliance for Biosecurity to respectfully request the opportunity to present oral testimony during the Subcommittee's public witness hearings on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

The Alliance for Biosecurity is a collaboration between the Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), pharmaceutical companies, and biotechnology companies working to develop vaccines, medicines, and other 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.

Funding in the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill contributes significantly to this objective. The Alliance would very much appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee to discuss the accomplishments that have already been made as a result of the committee's previous support, and the areas in which we believe additional federal investment is urgently needed to improve our preparedness for bioterrorist attacks or emerging infectious diseases.

As you know, the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) is one of our nation's first lines of defense against biological, chemical, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) threats. Its mission is to support development of new drugs, vaccines, and other medical countermeasures that require a significant amount of resources, and time, to produce. Since these medical products have essentially no commercial market – the government is the sole customer - finding private investors willing to fully support development of medical countermeasures against CBRN threats is nearly impossible. For this reason, a public investment in BARDA is necessary if these needed countermeasures are to be developed.

BARDA was initially authorized at \$1.07 billion over three years, but funding levels have fallen far short of this mark: \$201 million was provided by Congress in FY07 and 08 combined,

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[Hematech, Inc., a subsidiary of Kirin Pharma Company, Ltd.](#) • [Human Genome Sciences, Inc.](#) • [NanoViricides, Inc.](#) • [Pfizer Inc.](#) • [PharmAthene](#) • [Siga Technologies](#) • [Unither](#)

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approximately one-fifth of the authorized level. Because the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is operating under a continuing resolution it is unclear what level of FY09 funding will ultimately be provided for BARDA, although the current FY09 omnibus spending bill includes \$275 million.

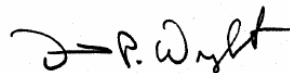
\$275 million is not an inconsiderable sum. However, drug and vaccine development is an extremely resource-intensive process, and developing countermeasures to protect the nation against CBRN threats will require much greater support. A recent report by the non-profit Center for Biosecurity of UPMC, *BARDA FY09 Advanced Development Cost Estimates for Medical Countermeasures Against Biological Threats*, notes that "to have a 90% chance of ultimately developing one successful medical countermeasure (MCM) for each requirement set forth in the Public Health Emergency Countermeasures Enterprise (PHEMCE) Implementation Plan," advanced development funding for BARDA would need to be \$3.39 billion per fiscal year for many years.

Clearly, there must be a substantially increased investment in BARDA's Advanced Development Fund to ensure that the country is better prepared for a terrorist attack or public health emergency. Given the current economic situation, we recognize that even in the area of national security, priorities cannot always be funded at levels commensurate with the magnitude of threats. For this reason, we are requesting \$1.7 billion in FY10 for advanced development funding under BARDA, which represents one-half the level recommended by the Center for Biosecurity. We recognize that this is a significant outlay. But developing new medical countermeasures, while expensive, is an endeavor critical to national security. If BARDA is given \$1.7 billion for FY10, it can support important work on advanced research and development of needed countermeasures. Without sufficient funds, promising products will languish and the nation will remain vulnerable.

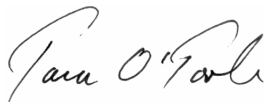
We thank you for your consideration on this vital national security matter. Should you have any questions, please contact our Washington, D.C. representative Jodie Curtis (202-230-5147, [jodie.curtis@dbr.com](mailto:jodie.curtis@dbr.com)). Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Alliance,



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