

# Alliance for Biosecurity

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## Alliance for Biosecurity Press Release

### ALLIANCE FOR BIOSECURITY PARTICIPATING IN BRIEFING ON CAPITOL HILL TO MARK INTRODUCTION OF NEW BIODEFENSE LEGISLATION IN CONGRESS

WASHINGTON, DC – (June 6, 2006) – Members of the Alliance for Biosecurity will speak today at a bi-partisan policy briefing to mark the introduction by Representatives Mike Rogers (R-MI) and Anna Eshoo (D-CA) of the House version of the Biodefense and Pandemic Vaccine and Drug Development Act of 2006, which has already been introduced in the Senate by Senator Burr (R-NC). After comments by Mr. Rogers, three members of the Alliance – Dr. Tom Inglesby from the Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), Dr. Susan Berger of Pfizer, Inc, and Dr. Clem Lewin of Acambis, Inc. – will discuss the threat posed by bioterrorism, the need for new biodefense countermeasures (medicines and vaccines), and the important foundation laid by the original Project BioShield legislation. The panelists will also describe the current need for new legislation to improve biodefense countermeasure development by strengthening industry-government partnerships, funding of advanced development stages of countermeasure development (the so-called “Valley of Death”), and enhancing current BioShield procurement authorities.

Dr. Inglesby, Dr. Berger, and Dr. Lewin will speak on behalf of the Alliance for Biosecurity, a consortium consisting of the non-profit Center for Biosecurity of UPMC and pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies committed to promoting a new era in the prevention and treatment of severe infectious diseases – particularly those that present global security challenges. The Alliance includes companies working on infectious diseases, companies that have been awarded BioShield contracts, and other companies poised to compete for new biodefense procurement contracts.

Dr. Inglesby will discuss the threat posed by bioterrorism and pandemics, and the urgent need to improve national biopreparedness. “The threat of biological attacks and pandemics is a critical national security challenge that will only deepen in years ahead. To cope with these biological threats will require resources far beyond what we have seen and the long-term commitment of government, industry and academia,” Dr. Inglesby said. He will also discuss why the rapid development and large-scale production of key biodefense vaccines and medicines must be a central pillar of national biodefense, and he will call for a more robust partnership between government and industry that could make this happen.

Dr. Berger will discuss the need for government and industry to work together in the public interest to find ways of dramatically increasing the nation’s stockpile of medicines and vaccines. “Ideally, the top pharma companies and dozens of innovative biotech companies would be in a race to produce effective medical countermeasures for our nation. The current reality, unfortunately, is almost the opposite,” Dr. Berger said. She will discuss ways of reversing the troubling industry trend away from research into anti-biotic treatments.

Dr. Lewin will comment specifically on the so-called “Valley of Death,” the unfunded gap between government funding of early stage development activities and the BioShield procurement contracts for products. “Passing legislation this year to address this funding gap

will be a major step forward in helping to sustain biotech companies involved in countermeasure development activities,” Dr. Lewin said.

All three Alliance speakers will emphasize the need for Congress to pass biosecurity legislation this year in order to send a signal to companies and their investors that government is interested in supporting the development and production of vaccines and medicines to counter bioterrorist attacks and naturally occurring pandemics. “Congress’ decision to postpone or pass biosecurity legislation this year will be felt over years to come,” said Dr. Lewin. “We can take steps now to build a sustainable base of companies able to defend against the threats posed by biological agents, or we can wait until the next crisis to act and run the risk of not being able to respond in any meaningful way.”

#### **About the Alliance for Biosecurity**

The Alliance for Biosecurity was formed in June of 2005 by pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology companies and the Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Alliance members are committed to partnering with government and promoting a new era in the prevention and treatment of severe infectious diseases – particularly those that present global security challenges – through innovative and accelerated research, development and production of countermeasures. Company members of the Alliance include: Acambis, Inc., Caprion Pharmaceuticals, Inc., DOR BioPharma, Inc., Dynport Vaccine Company, Emergent BioSolutions, GlaxoSmithKline, Human Genome Sciences, Inc., Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics, Inc., Pfizer, Inc., PharmAthene, and VaxGen, Inc.

**About the Alliance Panelists**

Tom Inglesby, M.D. is the Deputy Director and COO of the Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Susan Berger, PhD is Director, Science Knowledge and Policy at Pfizer, Inc. Ms. Berger is also a Co-Chair of the Alliance for Biosecurity.

Clem Lewin, PhD is Vice President of Biodefense and Policy at Acambis, Inc.

**About the Briefing**

The briefing will be in Room HC-7 of the Capitol Building at 4:00 PM on Tuesday, June 6, 2006.

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