

November 1, 2018

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

We write today to offer our thanks for the National Biodefense Strategy released on September 18th, 2018 and specifically to express our support for the Strategy's goal to reduce the emergence and spread of antimicrobial-resistant pathogens domestically and internationally. The inclusion of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in this Strategy sends a powerful signal that this issue will be an important priority for this administration.

Our organizations, comprised of stakeholders from the public health, developer, consumer, provider, research, and patient communities are deeply concerned about the threat AMR poses to our biosecurity. Antimicrobial resistant pathogens complicate soldiers' wounds, exacerbate casualties associated with both natural and manmade emergencies, and could be weaponized by our nation's enemies. Moreover, AMR presents a major public health risk that jeopardizes health care gains to society that rely on the ability to effectively treat and prevent bacterial infections, such as organ transplantation, cancer chemotherapy, major surgery, and care of immunocompromised individuals and preterm infants.

We are therefore pleased to support the AMR goals and objectives in the new Biodefense Strategy. Specifically, we look forward to working with the administration on efforts to strengthen surveillance, implement stewardship and prevention strategies, advance research, and incentivize a sustainable development pipeline of urgently needed new therapeutics, diagnostics and prevention tools. According to an analysis by the Pew Charitable Trusts, our current pipeline is insufficient to meet current and anticipated needs, underscoring the need to discover and develop new drugs as well as to conserve the drugs we have. We appreciate that the Biodefense Strategy offers a framework for policy implementation, and encourage the administration to request that Congress provide dedicated funding for these activities. We also look forward to working closely with the administration to advance and implement the more detailed policies needed to achieve the AMR goals identified in the Strategy. We stand ready to assist in any way possible and hope you will call on us proactively for specific input and assistance.

As diverse stakeholders dedicated to addressing the challenge of AMR, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with Biodefense Steering Committee and/or staff to further discuss the plan and the potential to address the important challenge.

Sincerely,

AdvaMedDx
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology
American Association of Avian Pathologists
American Association of Bovine Practitioners

American Association of Immunologists
American Gastroenterological Society
American Gerontological Society
American Medical Association
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Nephrology
American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene
American Thoracic Society
Antibiotic Resistance Action Center, the George Washington University
Antimicrobial Innovation Alliance
Antimicrobials Working Group (Amplix Pharmaceuticals, Aridis Pharmaceuticals, Arsanis Inc., Cidara Therapeutics Inc., ContraFect Corporation, Entasis Therapeutics Inc., Iterum Therapeutics Ltd., Melinta Therapeutics Inc., Motif Bio plc, Nabriva Therapeutics US Inc., Paratek Pharmaceuticals Inc., SCYNEXIS Inc., Spero Therapeutics, Inc., Summit Therapeutics plc, T2 Biosystems Inc., Theravance Biopharma U.S. Inc., Viamet, Vical Incorporated, and Zavante Therapeutics Inc.)
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
bioMérieux
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention
Cepheid
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Duke Center for Antimicrobial Stewardship and Infection Prevention
Emory Antibiotic Resistance Center
Fecal Transplant Foundation
Foundation to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance
GlaxoSmithKline
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security
The Joint Commission
Making-A-Difference in Infectious Diseases
March of Dimes
Merck
National Association of City and County Health Officials
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Athletic Trainers Association
NovaDigm Therapeutics
ONCORD Inc.
Peggy Lillis Foundation
The Pew Charitable Trusts
Renal Physicians Association
Roche Diagnostics Corporation
Sepsis Alliance
Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America
Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists
Spero Therapeutics
Trust for America's Health

cc: John Bolton, National Security Advisor of the United States, The White House
cc: Jeff Sessions, United States Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice
cc: James Mattis, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense
cc: Thomas McCaffery, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, U.S. Department of Defense
cc: Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
cc: Sonny Perdue, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
cc: Robert Wilkie, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
cc: Andrew Wheeler, Acting Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
cc: Robert Kadlec, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
cc: Robert Redfield, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention