



Health Subcommittee Legislative Hearing: “Legislative Solutions to Bolster Preparedness and Response for All Hazards and Public Health Security Threats”

June 13th, 2023

Purpose of Hearing: This hearing addresses the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) that was signed in 2006 and reauthorized in 2016 and 2019. This hearing was held to gather expert knowledge on how this act could be improved and the ways that it has proven to be effective in the past. Full details on the hearing: [Hearing Memo](#)

Dr. Gerry Parker Statement Summary:

Dr. Gerry Parker outlined his statement by providing four recommendations for Congress to pursue in order to bolster public health preparedness and response to imminent health security threats. First, the relationship between local emergency responders and the federal government must be strengthened in order to create a close working relationship with people on the front line. This will lead to policy being put into action and clarify communication channels so that a response can be more efficient in the midst of a volatile environment. Secondly, the new changes to PAHPA need to address the supply chain and “control towers” concept which can be created as an early warning system to the government. This system will indicate when the next health crisis could start, but these changes will mainly result in the fulfillment of state and local resources that will equip an effective response. Next, Dr. Parker recommends that Congress creates an organizational structure that will empower an individual who can communicate with POTUS and the OMB director directly while utilizing the bureaucracy rather than being restricted by it. Congress has created this structure for other topics of interest, but biodefense and biosecurity must be incorporated. Lastly, Dr. Parker recommends that we, as a world leader in this field, need to take a more active approach in addressing the issue of biosecurity and utilize the research that has already been conducted with the funding that has been used. Dr. Parker concludes his statement by showing how we need to adapt to complex technologies and that “we must avoid fighting the last war, and we must avoid complacency”.

1. Strengthen the relationships between local emergency responders and the federal government.
2. The new changes to PAHPA need to address the supply chain and “control tower” concept which can be created as an early warning system to the government when the next health security crisis starts.
3. An organizational structure must be created by Congress which will empower an individual who can communicate with POTUS and the OMB director directly.
4. We need to take a more active approach in addressing this issue of biosecurity and utilize the research that has already been conducted with our funding as other countries are looking to us as a leader in this field.

“We must avoid fighting the last war, and we must avoid complacency”