



Submitted electronically

August 2, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Prepare for and Respond to Existing Viruses, Emerging New Threats, and Pandemics Act (PREVENT Pandemics Act)

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Burr,

I am writing to express the Milken Institute's support for your continued efforts to bring the PREVENT Pandemics Act to the Senate floor and see it passed. It is vital that the Senate, as well as the House, address the gaps exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic in the nation's public health and medical preparedness and response systems. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with you on policies that will improve and strengthen our nation's capabilities to prepare for and respond to future public health emergencies.

FasterCures and the Center for Public Health are centers of the Milken Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank. As part of the Milken Institute, FasterCures and the Center for Public Health work to catalyze practical, scalable solutions to address the challenges of our biomedical and public health systems, respectively. Guided by a conviction that the best ideas, under-resourced, cannot succeed, we conduct research and analysis and convene top experts, innovators, and influencers from different backgrounds and competing viewpoints. We leverage this expertise and insight to construct programs and policy initiatives.

We are particularly interested in the provisions of the bill aimed at **Improving Public Health Preparedness and Response Capacity** and at **Enhancing Development and Combating Shortages of Medical Products**. We shared our comments on those sections in a [comment letter dated February 4, 2022](#). We applauded the addition of several elements during the mark-up, including:

- Establishing the role of an Industry Liaison within the new Office of Pandemic Preparedness and Response Policy within the Executive Office of the President, which will be critical to supporting information sharing and coordination with industry stakeholders as well as facilitating public-private partnerships (Sec. 107);
- Ensuring there is sufficient lab capacity to monitor the emergence of drug resistant pathogens (Sec. 234); and
- Strengthening One Health collaboration related to prevention, detection, control, and response for zoonotic diseases (Sec. 235).

We are also pleased to see the inclusion of the establishment of the **Advanced Research Projects Authority for Health (ARPA-H)** in the bill. FasterCures has long supported giving NIH DARPA-like authorities and capabilities for more high-risk, solutions-oriented research and development, so we are gratified that this concept is finally becoming a reality. We appreciate that the PREVENT Pandemics Act addresses the unique hiring needs and authorities that an entity with this mission and operating model require to be effective.

We would like to take this opportunity to express again the urgency of addressing the lack of new, innovative antibiotics in the pipeline. Some experts believe antibiotic-resistant infections pose a much bigger threat to our society than the COVID-19 pandemic.ⁱ New incentives such as those created in The Pioneering Antimicrobial Subscriptions to End Upsurging Resistance (PASTEUR) Act (S. 2076) and the Developing an Innovative Strategy for Antimicrobial Resistant Microorganisms (DISARM) Act (H.R. 4127) will be critical to spurring new antibiotic development. We urge you to consider including incentives such as these as a component of the PREVENT Pandemics Act.

Conclusion

Thank you for your continued work to strengthen our nation's public health and medical preparedness and response systems. We welcome the opportunity to provide additional detail on the information above and to serve as a resource as you continue to refine the bill.

Sincerely,



Esther Krofah
Executive Vice President for Health
Milken Institute

Attachment: Milken Institute Comment Letter on Senate HELP Prevent Pandemics Draft Legislation, dated February 4, 2022

ⁱ Outterson, Kevin and Skinner, Henry. "Antibiotic-resistant infections could dwarf the COVID-19 pandemic." *The Boston Globe*. July 18, 2022. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/07/18/opinion/antibiotic-resistant-infections-could-dwarf-covid-19-pandemic/> (accessed on July 18, 2022).