

The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (S. 3678)

This legislation reauthorizes the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-188) to protect the public more effectively and efficiently by responding to public health emergencies with a clear line of authority from local to state to federal officials. It also builds on the Project BioShield Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-276) to accelerate advanced research and development of drugs and vaccines to protect the United States from health emergencies, such as bird flu. By building on the lessons we have learned from Hurricane Katrina and September 11th, this bill will improve our public health and medical preparedness and response capabilities for emergencies.

Puts Someone in Charge

- Identifies the Secretary of Health and Human Services as the lead federal official responsible for public health and medical response to emergencies.
- Unifies HHS preparedness and response programs under a re-named Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, including moving the National Disaster Medical System from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to HHS. This consolidation will clarify responsibilities and lines of authority within the federal government.

Provides Funds for State and Local Preparedness

- Reauthorizes over \$1 billion per year in federal funding through grants from HHS for state and local public health and medical preparedness.
- Stresses accountability by requiring HHS to establish evidence-based benchmarks and performance standards to measure progress, and requires States to measure and report on these activities.
- Focuses on strategies to address the public health and medical needs of at-risk individuals, including children and senior citizens, who have special needs during an emergency.

Improves Public Health Security

- Builds the foundation for a uniform public health security system that is robust and trained to address all-hazards public health emergencies. Every State and local public health department across the nation must have core capabilities for emergency preparedness.
- Modernizes how public health departments detect, respond to, and manage public health threats, by collecting instant electronic information which will enable public health officials to make informed decisions before, during, and after a public health emergency.
- Strengthens the nation's public health infrastructure by offering loan repayments to recruit and train a stronger public health workforce, capable of responding to emergencies.

Speeds Up Emergency Medical Response

- Improves training, logistics, and planning for health care providers and volunteers to ensure emergency medical care can be delivered faster during a disaster.
- Promotes the use of mobile hospitals and alternative federal facilities which can help handle an increased number of patients during an emergency.
- Makes it easier for health care providers to volunteer in emergency situations and enables the Secretary of HHS to provide liability protections for approved volunteers.

(See reverse side)

Develops More Medical Countermeasures

- Improves our ability to quickly develop countermeasures to protect against deadly threats such as pandemic flu and bioterrorism. The process for developing new drugs and vaccines still takes up to a decade and costs hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Reorganizes and enhances HHS medical countermeasure research, development, and procurement activities. The Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) will be an aggressive venture capitalist partnering with universities, research institutions and industry on the advanced development of promising drugs and vaccines.
- Creates a National Biodefense Science Board to advise the Secretary on threats, challenges and opportunities presented by advances in biological and life sciences.