



January 18, 2023

Janet Woodcock, M.D.
Principle Deputy Commissioner
Office of the Commissioner
Food and Drug Administration

Erik Mettler

Assistant Director, Environmental Health Association (NEHA) with the recommendations outlined in the Reagan-Udall Foundation report. We represent almost 7,000 governmental and private sector environmental health professionals throughout the U.S., our territories and people in the uniformed services. We are the profession's strongest advocate for excellence in the practice of environmental health. Our mission is to build, empower and sustain the environmental health profession. We achieve this through the provision of quality training, continuing education, and credentialing to our members and environmental health profession.

NEHA supports the recommendations of the Reagan-Udall Foundation to improve our nation's food safety system. We are prepared to assist FDA in its efforts, through our network of state, local, tribal, and territorial food safety officials who will be responsible for implementing changes to FDA's food safety system, through our credentialing programs, our training of the,

Our recommendations will focus on three (3) key recommendations where we are able to assist FDA to enable it to achieve the goals of the report – working with the State, Local, Tribal and Territorial workforce the US Food Safety System, Personnel and Workforce, and Financial within FDA's Food Safety Resources.

- A new Foods Advisory Committee, at the Commissioner-level, should be established to strengthen external input to Human Foods Program activities.
[Recommendation/Structure6]

Our Association represents the second largest workforce in public health – the environmental health workforce, making it the largest single workforce performing food safety in this nation. NEHA's membership represent the state, local, tribal and territorial (SLTT) food safety officials. SLTT officials implement most food safety inspections, throughout the human and animal food regulatory sphere. Most



SLTT environmental health programs carried out by Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Registered Sanitarians (REHS/RS), as well as other credentialed personnel, serve to



environmental health practitioners, providing FDA access to thousands involved in the food safety workforce.

Finally, as noted above, we have the staff, resources and ability to perform research to gather data and analyze measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the food safety workforce.

3.

- FDA should give the highest priority to the formulation of an appropriations strategy that begins with a well-defined agenda and a clear case for why increased Program funding is necessary. [Recommendation/Resources6]
- In addition, while the Panel recognizes that prior efforts have been unsuccessful, F



Food safety is a critical public health issue that affects individuals and communities across the U.S. and around the world.

We look forward to working with you and the FDA in implementing the recommendations of the Reagan-Udall Foundation report to improve the nation's food safety system. Please contact Mr. Rance Baker or Doug Farquhar if you have immediate questions. We would also be delighted to speak with you.

In Health,

