



September 5, 2023

The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
Chair, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy, MD  
Ranking Member, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
Member, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitt Romney  
Member, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Sanders, Ranking Member Cassidy, Senator Casey, and Senator Romney,

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) represents nearly 7,000 environmental public health professionals in governmental, private, academic, and uniformed services sectors in the U.S., its territories, and internationally. We are the profession's strongest advocate for excellence in the practice of environmental health and thought leaders in delivering on our mission to build, sustain, and empower an effective environmental health workforce.

We shepherd one the most vital next generations of professionals—the environmental public health professional. These professionals are on the front line protecting communities from harmful impacts in our environment, including animal-borne disease, water contamination, air pollution, hazardous materials, contaminated food, and

On behalf of the environmental health profession, we offer the following comments to the bipartisan discussion draft of the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee to reauthorize the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA).

We believe that environmental health professionals play a critically important role in public health preparedness, response, and recovery that serves to mitigate or reduce instances of preventable injury and illness that often occur during and after emergencies and disasters. We also acknowledge that there is wide jurisdictional variability in the



We support the committee's interest in enhancing wastewater surveillance for pathogen detection at SLTT environmental public health departments. Wastewater surveillance, which measures pathogen levels in wastewater, is vital in evaluating community-level trends that can be used to complement traditional surveillance and interventions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched the National Wastewater Surveillance System to coordinate wastewater surveillance programs that were being implemented by SLTT environmental public health departments. Continued support of such efforts is critical to ensuring effective pathogen detection.

We support the reauthorization of the Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health Program, as well as language that would permit award recipients to use the funding to provide continuing education and training for individuals carrying out activities related to the program. We also advocate for dedicated appropriations to support this program.

The past 3 years have demonstrated the need for Congress to support robust, fully funded environmental public health infrastructure with sustainable annual resources toward



agencies can continue to assess their distinct vulnerabilities—both locally and regionally—and prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies.

We support the need for four separate but equally essential funding streams:

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