Defense of Animal Agriculture: Discussion of the findings of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense

U.S. Animal Health Association Annual Meeting Committee on Animal Emergency Management

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Local conservation. Global health.
The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense

Study Panel

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Co-Chair

Thomas J. Ridge
Co-Chair

Secretary Donna Shalala
Panel Member

Senator Tom Daschle
Panel Member

Representative Jim Greenwood
Panel Member

Honorable Kenneth Wainstein
Panel Member
The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense

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Director, Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies, Potomac Institute for Policy Studies
Professor Yonah Alexander is the Director of the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies and...

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Executive Vice President for Health and Policy, Eco-Health Alliance
Dr. William Karesh is the Executive Vice President for Health and Policy of EcoHealth Alliance, President of the...

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Senior Vice President, Hudson Institute
Lewis Libby is Senior Vice President of Hudson Institute and guides the Institute's program on national security and...

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Chief Scientist, Complex Adaptive Systems, Regents' Professor and Del E. Webb Chair in Health Innovation, Arizona State University
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Tevi Troy is the President of the American Health Policy Institute. He is also the author of the...
DEFENSE OF ANIMAL AGRICULTURE

BIPARTISAN REPORT OF THE BLUE RIBBON STUDY PANEL ON BIODEFENSE

October 2017
PROPOSALS FOR THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Leadership
- Ensure that the National Biodefense Strategy and its implementation plan address threats to food and agriculture, including any gaps in Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9 implementation;
- Collect detailed agrodefense expenditures and provide them to Congress as part of an annual biodefense data call;

Coordination
- Formalize cooperation between the federal agriculture and law enforcement sectors to ensure that outbreaks are evenly addressed by both, in particular through the next iteration of the Food and Agriculture Incident Annex (FAIA);
- Ensure that the FAIA describes the critical role played by the nation's fusion centers, and is regularly exercised at the state level;
- Develop a standard of quality for biosurveillance;

Collaboration
- Determine the optimal scope of wildlife disease surveillance activity and enhance support for the National Wildlife Disease Program commensurate with that need;
- Enhance collaboration among federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector entities that collect animal health data;
- Finalize the rule for the National List of Reportable Animal Diseases and incentivize rigorous reporting;

Innovation
- Assess the ability of the National Veterinary Stockpile to meet the mandates of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9, request budgets commensurate with the threat, and invest in countermeasure development, procurement, and usage policy based on the identified need;
- Devote sufficient resources to diagnostics, including rapid diagnostics, for the National Veterinary Stockpile;
- Establish an antigen bank for foot-and-mouth disease virus; and
- Develop a business plan for the National Bio- and Agrodefense Facility that prioritizes public-private partnerships.

PROPOSALS FOR CONGRESS

Leadership
- Require the identification of agrodefense expenditures across the federal government;

Collaboration
- Commit to a more realistic funding plan for federal wildlife surveillance efforts, and facilitate increased data collection from livestock and wildlife populations;
- Assess the authorities of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Agriculture to further collaboration with other public and private stakeholders that collect animal health data, and take necessary steps to support those efforts;
- Continue funding the National Animal Health Laboratory Network at no less than current authorized levels, with the possibility of additional funds should they be needed to fulfill the Network's mission;

Innovation
- Establish a prevention fund for animal health disease and disaster programs; and
- Authorize the National Veterinary Stockpile, and require annual progress assessments toward requirements.
Sec. 1086. National Biodefense Strategy

(a) STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REQUIRED—The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Agriculture shall jointly develop a national biodefense strategy and associated implementation plan, which shall include a review and assessment of biodefense policies, practices, programs and initiatives. Such Secretaries shall review and, as appropriate, revise the strategy biennially.

(b) ELEMENTS—The strategy and associated implementation plan required under subsection (a) shall include each of the following:

(1) An inventory and assessment of all existing strategies, plans, policies, laws, and interagency agreements related to biodefense, including prevention, deterrence, preparedness, detection, response, attribution, recovery, and mitigation.

(2) A description of the biological threats, including biological warfare, bioterrorism, naturally occurring infectious diseases, and accidental exposures.

(3) A description of the current programs, efforts, or activities of the United States Government with respect to preventing the acquisition, proliferation, and use of a biological weapon, preventing an accidental or naturally occurring biological outbreak, and mitigating the effects of a biological epidemic.

(4) A description of the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Agencies, including internal and external coordination procedures, in identifying and sharing information related to, warning of, and protection against, acts of terrorism using biological agents and weapons and accidental or naturally occurring biological outbreaks.

(5) An articulation of related or required interagency capabilities and whole-of-government activities required to support the national biodefense strategy.

(6) Recommendations for strengthening and improving the current biodefense capabilities, authorities, and command structures of the United States Government.

(7) Recommendations for improving and formalizing interagency coordination and support mechanisms with respect to providing a robust national biodefense.

(8) Any other matters the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Agriculture determine necessary.

(c) SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS—Not later than 275 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees the strategy and associated implementation plan required by subsection (a). The strategy and implementation plan shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) BRIEFINGS—Not later than March 1, 2017, and annually thereafter until March 1, 2019, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Agriculture shall provide to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives a joint briefing on the strategy developed under subsection (a) and the status of the implementation of such strategy.

(e) GAO REVIEW—Not later than 180 days after the date of the submittal of the strategy and implementation plan under subsection (c), the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review of the strategy and implementation plan to analyze gaps and resources mapped against the requirements of the National Biodefense Strategy and existing United States biodefense policy documents.

(f) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means the following:

(1) The congressional defense committees.


(3) The Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

(4) The Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.