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NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
COUNTY & CITY  
HEALTH OFFICIALS

August 1, 2007

The Honorable Chuck Hagel  
248 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
309 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Hagel:

On behalf of the National Association of County and City Health Officials, I would like to express support for the Public Health Preparedness Workforce Development Act.

Workforce shortages are a growing challenge for local health departments. In its 2005 *Profile of Local Health Departments*, NACCHO found that of the 59% of LHDs surveyed that had determined when their employees would be eligible for retirement, 20% had staff eligible to retire in five years. In addition, 64% of LHD top executives surveyed were older than age 50.

This bill would provide scholarships and loan repayment to encourage individuals to enter careers in public health preparedness. The bill would also support mid-career training for public health professionals to join the preparedness or biodefense workforce. These are important steps toward addressing workforce shortages in local health departments and ensuring that the necessary staff is available to respond to a public health emergency.

NACCHO appreciates your past support of public health workforce needs and looks forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Patrick M. Libbey  
Executive Director