



National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

## For Immediate Release

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## NACCHO's Preparedness Summit Spotlights Biodefense, National Security, and Technological Innovation

— Plenary Speakers Include Former Secretary of U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Thomas Ridge and Former U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman —

**Washington, DC, April 19, 2017**—Due to the changing political scene in Washington, D.C. and the White House's recent military engagements in the Middle East, issues of biodefense and national security are front-page news. The examination of our biodefense and national security has a new urgency, and emergency preparedness is at the heart of a community's ability to survive both natural and man-made disasters. It falls to our local health departments in collaboration with others to ensure the safety and well-being of our communities. Local health departments' ability to adapt to the changing scene is the focus of the National Association of County and City Health Officials' (NACCHO) 2017 Preparedness Summit, April 24–28, in Atlanta, Georgia: "Forces of Change: Capabilities, Innovation, and Partnerships."

"The prospect of a catastrophic event is not something most of us want to envision, but we must be prepared in the event of a disaster," said Dr. William M. Barnes, Ph.D., MBA, acting executive director and chief program officer of NACCHO. "Our local health departments, staffed with highly trained professionals, are entrusted to keep our communities safe. The Preparedness Summit is a premier opportunity for local health departments on the frontlines to gather, and learn from our top experts and from each other on what it means to help create conditions for strong communities in the face of disaster."

Three plenary sessions featuring renowned experts in biodefense, national health security, and technological innovation will set the tone and spearhead conversation throughout the 2017 Preparedness Summit. Other noteworthy sessions include Town Hall sessions on Zika virus disease and biosurveillance, led by senior leadership from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

### **Plenary Sessions:**

Tuesday, April 25; 8:00–10:00am ET

#### **“Envisioning the Future: Federal Efforts to Prepare the Nation”**

- Thomas Ridge, Former Governor and Secretary of U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Joseph Lieberman, Former Senator (Ridge and Lieberman serve as co-chairs for Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense)

Thursday, April 27; 8:30–10:00am ET

#### **“The Way Forward: Emerging Technologies Driving Public Health Emergency Preparedness”**

- Dr. John Brownstein, Chief Innovation Officer, Boston Children's Hospital and Professor, Harvard Medical School
- Ben Hamamoto, Research Manager, Institute for the Future

Friday, April 28; 10:30am–12:00pm ET

#### **“A Sea of Changes: A Closer Look at Climate, Its Impact on Water, and Preparing Communities for the Future”**

- David Rozell, MPH, CPH, Program Manager, Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Tulare County (CA) Health and Human Services
- Clark Halvorson, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Public Health, Washington State Department of Health
- Ambassador Selwin Hart, MPH, CPH, Ambassador of Barbados to the U.S. and Former Director of the United Nations Climate Change Support Team

Live streaming of the plenaries is available to journalists covering the event.

Reporters should contact Theresa Spinner at [tspinner@naccho.org](mailto:tspinner@naccho.org) for live stream access.

Join NACCHO at this four-day event, which provides the only cross-disciplinary learning designed specifically for the preparedness community. Each year, the Preparedness Summit convenes nearly 2,000 diverse preparedness professionals representing public sector, nonprofit, academic, and industry partners, to leverage the field’s emerging capabilities, innovation, and partnerships for a healthier, more resilient nation. To learn more about the Preparedness Summit, please click [here](#).

**About the Preparedness Summit**

The Preparedness Summit (<http://preparednesssummit.org/>) is the first and longest-running national conference on public health preparedness. Since its beginning in 2006, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) has taken a leadership role in convening a wide array of partners to participate in the Summit; presenting new research findings, sharing tools and resources, and providing a variety of opportunities for attendees to learn how to implement model practices that enhance the nation's capabilities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters and other emergencies.

**About NACCHO**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).