



National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NACCHO Applauds Passage of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act**

*— Legislation maintains commitment to local public health preparedness —*

**Washington, DC, June 4, 2019** — The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO), the voice of the nation’s nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments, applauded the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act (S. 1379). The bill passed the Senate on May 16 and is now headed to the President’s desk to be signed into law. This important legislation maintains the commitment of the federal government to local public health preparedness.

“Local health departments play a critical role in preparing for, responding to, and mitigating disasters. They are called into action during wildfires in California, tornados in the Midwest, hurricanes in the South, bioterrorism threats, active shooter incidents, and disease outbreaks that can strike anywhere in the nation. Our communities are vulnerable to many types of threats and public health preparedness requires the continued development and improvement of public health systems to ensure that communities are capable of responding to all hazards,” said NACCHO’s Chief of Government and Public Affairs, Adriane Casalotti, MPH, MSW. “We are particularly pleased that this bipartisan legislation includes key NACCHO priorities like the Public Health Emergency Preparedness

Program and Hospital Preparedness Program, which help local communities be prepared for any disaster that they may face. We thank the bill sponsors for working tirelessly to get this important legislation over the finish line.”

“But reauthorizing this legislation is just one step toward ensuring our local communities have the resources they need to keep our communities safe. While public health threats are a constant and increasing concern, federal funds have declined over the past decade. That has ripple effects in how a community can prepare for and respond to disasters when they strike. We will continue to work with Congress to ensure strong funding and consistent support for these important emergency preparedness programs.”

The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act supports local health department disaster preparedness efforts in the following ways:

- Reauthorizes the Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant program and Hospital Preparedness Program to keep the nation’s emergency preparedness infrastructure strong;
- Strengthens the National Health Security Strategy, including global health security;
- Authorizes the Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasure Enterprise, including a role for input from stakeholders, including local health departments;
- Reauthorizes the Strategic National Stockpile, and places additional requirements on how development, procurement, and deployment decisions are made;
- Clarifies state liability laws for volunteers in the Medical Reserve Corps or involved in the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals;
- Establishes the children's preparedness unit at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and authorizes advisory committees on children, people with disabilities, and seniors; and
- Clarifies language for the public health emergency rapid response fund to make it easier to provide funding for the immediate needs resulting from a potential public health emergency.

Local health departments serve their communities during disasters by:

- Engaging local residents in public health preparedness planning and response, including diverse populations with unique needs;

- Serving as facilitators for collaborative preparedness planning throughout local health, medical, and emergency response systems, including cross-border and global partners to enhance national, international, and global health security;
- Building coalitions and increasing community involvement by leveraging local partnerships;
- Building epidemiologic capacity to monitor and assess disease patterns and other health related determinants and conditions prior to, during, and after a health incident or emergency;
- Preventing or mitigating the spread of disease and reducing incidence of illness and mortality;
- Ensuring timely and effective communications of health threats and information;
- Enhancing workforce development by planning, training, and using a continuous quality improvement process to maintain a proficient workforce in numbers sufficient to ensure health security;
- Mobilizing resources, supplies, equipment, and volunteer assets during a response to health emergencies to increase surge capacity and meet unanticipated needs;
- Using innovative strategic approaches to obtain positive measurable outcomes;
- Maintaining situation awareness of national health security; and
- Striving to enhance community resiliency and recovery.

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### **About NACCHO**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local 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)