

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 18, 2016

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 136  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 156  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As you and your colleagues begin work on the fiscal year (FY) 2017 Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and related agencies appropriations bill, we would like to thank you for your consideration of increased funding for vector-control programs through the administration's Zika supplemental request. As you know, increased support for vector-control programs at the CDC can help to control the populations of *Aedes* mosquitoes that transmit viruses such as Zika, dengue, West Nile, and other arboviral diseases to humans and animals. In addition to the supplemental Zika request, we respectfully request at least a doubling of the vector-borne diseases line to at least \$55 million, within the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The NCEZID works to protect the United States and the world from emerging and zoonotic infectious diseases, including diseases spread by mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas; foodborne and waterborne illnesses; infections that spread in hospitals and/or are resistance to antibiotics; deadly diseases like Ebola and anthrax; and diseases caused by contact with animals.

CDC's FY 2017 budget request includes funding for vector-borne disease activities under NCEZID's Core Infectious Diseases budget request. The Core Infectious Diseases budget includes a number of CDC's infectious disease activities—such as vector-borne diseases, Lyme disease, emerging infections, and high-consequence pathogens—and also supports the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Cooperative Grant Program, which strengthens surveillance for infectious diseases, early detection of newly emerging disease threats, and identification and response to outbreaks at the state and local levels.

CDC's vector-borne diseases program plays a critical role in the nation's capacity to detect, control, and prevent bacteria and viruses transmitted by mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas. In addition to critical collaboration with and support of state and local health departments, CDC experts also conduct field investigations and intramural research to address risks to the United States from emerging and invasive pathogens anywhere in the world. The CDC serves as the national diagnostic reference center for vector-borne viral and bacterial diseases.

Funding for the vector-borne diseases line supports the Division of Vector-Borne Diseases, with its main facility in Fort Collins, Colorado, and two branches in Atlanta (Rickettsial Zoonoses Branch) and San Juan, Puerto Rico (Dengue Branch). The work that all locations do supports efforts for domestic and global vector-borne disease control.

We know you have many difficult decisions to make, but we need to support critical public health infrastructure to prevent against devastating disease outbreaks. Thank you for your consideration of our request to at least double the vector-borne diseases line at NCEZID, to at least \$55 million.

Sincerely,



BRIAN SCHATZ  
U.S. Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND  
U.S. Senator



EDWARD J. MARKEY  
U.S. Senator



CHRISTOPHER A. COONS  
U.S. Senator



CHARLES E. SCHUMER  
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MICHAEL F. BENNET  
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ELIZABETH WARREN  
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