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### **HEARING ON COMBATTING BIOLOGICAL THREATS HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR ACTION**

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing – “Outbreaks, Attacks and Accidents: Combatting Biological Threats” – is an important step to assess the nation’s current state of preparedness and identify near-term concrete actions to protect the American public.

The U.S. has improved its preparedness capabilities over the past decade. However, these programs must grow and adapt to continue to function efficiently and respond to public health crises. As the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense highlighted in their report, policy changes strengthening medical countermeasure development will ensure we are prepared for any threat, both naturally occurring and man-made, that arises.

Specifically, the Alliance urges consideration of the following recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Study Panel’s Report, “A National Blueprint for Biodefense”:

1. The contracting process to develop medical countermeasures should be as simple, transparent and efficient as possible. Redundant, bureaucratic levels of review should be eliminated.
2. Stable and robust government funding is critical to ensuring that complex, multi-year research projects continue uninterrupted and produce critically needed medical products.
3. Novel incentives, such as the priority review voucher, should be put in place to spur private sector innovation and investment.

It is inevitable that the U.S. will face another natural or man-made threat. The Zika virus’ spread across South and Central America reminds us that we never know when a disease may grow into a serious concern. That is why we must bring a sense of urgency to investing in medical countermeasures *before* the threat arrives. This is the best investment we can make.

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*The Alliance for Biosecurity is a coalition of biopharmaceutical companies and laboratory/academic partners that promotes a strong public-private partnership to ensure medical countermeasures are available to protect public health and enhance national health security. The Alliance advocates for public policies and funding to support the rapid development, production, stockpiling, and distribution of critically needed medical countermeasures.*

For more information, visit the Alliance for Biosecurity website at [www.allianceforbiosecurity.org](http://www.allianceforbiosecurity.org).