

April 4, 2018

Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
Hon. Lamar Alexander, Chair  
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

RE: S.2615 – “Advancing Emergency Preparedness through One Health Act of 2018”

Dear Chairman Alexander and members of the HELP Committee:

Thank you for considering S.2615, a non-partisan bill co-sponsored by Senators Tina Smith (D-MN) and Todd Young (R-IN) to establish an interagency One Health program, among other purposes. This is to ask you to report this bill to the full body with your recommendation for approval.

Connections among human, animal, and environmental health fall generally under the jurisdiction of your committee, as they relate to health, public welfare, miners, biomedical research, agricultural colleges, education, and even the Red Cross. It is vital that we address them in a coordinated, integrated, “unsiloed” framework, as would be enabled by this proposed legislation.

Elected officials represent a wide range of interests and expertise, and arrive at policy decisions from those foundational perspectives. This is to urge you to consider this One Health Act from what you know... medicine, agriculture, education, systems thinking, workforce resiliency, military preparedness, etc. The One Health approach applies to concerns like cross-species infectious disease transmission (e.g. E-coli 0157, pandemic flu), vector-borne diseases (e.g. Zika), animal models for human illnesses (e.g. Alzheimer’s), efficacy of antibiotics and other drugs, immediate and long-range adverse effects of environmental contaminants (e.g. black lung disease), holistic emergency preparedness and responsiveness (e.g. hurricanes/severe storms, wildfire, floods), food safety, economic implications for commodity exports (e.g. certifiable quality of wheat, apples, soybeans, corn, fish), bioterrorism/food security, military medical readiness, capacity to produce food animals and crops under changing environmental circumstances, opening the minds and job opportunities for One Health leaders of tomorrow, and more.

As a nurse, environmental scientist, medical student trainer, former mayor and leader in my state association and National League of Cities, spouse of a veterinarian, and member of the One Health advisory board, I try to see the big picture. I hope you can too. Please support S.2615 for the future of our country and our world.

Respectfully,

Nancy Chaney

C: Hon. Mike Crapo, Senator from Idaho  
Hon. James Risch, Senator from Idaho