



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Dear Dr. Blaser:

I would like to thank you for your continued leadership of the Presidential Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (PACCARB). Your recent public meeting on global efforts to fight antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and incorporating AMR into pandemic preparedness was an insightful session that emphasized the importance of approaching the issue of AMR from a variety of perspectives. As we move forward, it is critical that we continue to broaden the ways in which we address AMR.

The U.S. has consistently recognized the necessity of addressing AMR as a component of pandemic preparedness. The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act of 2019 (Public Law No. 116-22) strengthens systems to prepare for significant threats such as AMR. Likewise, preventing naturally occurring infectious diseases, including from antimicrobial-resistant pathogens, is included among the goals in our National Biodefense Strategy and corresponding Implementation Plan. The President's national security memorandum from January 21, 2021, directs a strengthening of health security and pandemic preparedness policies and procedures to improve our response to emerging infectious threats, including resistant pathogens. While we are fortunate that our National Action Plan on Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria truly encompasses a whole of government approach to addressing AMR, we need to further ensure that AMR is also consistently highlighted in all of our current pandemic preparedness and response policies and activities.

Therefore, I hereby request that the PACCARB consider how the U.S. may leverage our existing pandemic preparedness frameworks to strengthen our defense against antimicrobial-resistant pathogens in response to a potential future, large-scale disease event. The Council should examine how existing pandemic preparedness policies may be augmented to address AMR, and whether additional policies or programs may be needed to be best prepared for a large-scale outbreak of a resistant pathogen. Please ensure a One Health approach to this task, identifying lessons learned from the human, animal, and environmental health domains that can be applied

across sectors. To inform your recommendations, the Council should collaborate closely with the Federal Interagency Task Force for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria, hold one or more public meetings in 2022 and invite stakeholders and experts in pandemic preparedness and health security to provide insight on the issue. Please prepare a report to present your findings and recommendations and submit it to me within one year of this request.

It is my hope that by improving our ability to prepare for and respond to infectious disease threats, including AMR, the U.S. can be a leader for advancing preparedness and reducing the burden of resistant infections around the world. I look forward to reviewing your recommendations and advancing our fight against AMR.

Sincerely,

Xavier Becerra