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Support the One Health Security Act

Dear Colleague,

Preventing pandemics is a national security priority. The majority of all emerging human infectious disease originate in animals. The rapidly accelerating pace of global trade and travel mean diseases spread faster than we are able to track them – imperiling lives, wrecking economies, and impairing national security. 80% of pathogens that are of bioterrorism concern also originate in animals. We cannot accurately predict whether the next biologic event our country faces will be natural, human-generated or accidental but we know that as a nation we are not as well-prepared as we can be. The One Health Security Act will increase threat information sharing, bioterror monitoring, and response activities by coordinating One Health-focused activities under the charge of the National Security Council.

A whole-of country coordinated approach is needed to prevent against the next pandemic and emerging threats to human health. The current fragmentation of federal agencies is a key factor that impedes rapid detection and response to biological threats. Jurisdictional issues and gaps in agency mandates weaken our situational awareness and biosurveillance efforts. We need to accelerate efforts to effectively protect our country.

This is a vital health, economic and national security issue and one that will continue to evolve. The Director of National Intelligence's 2022 Threat Assessment notes:

“Countries globally remain vulnerable to the emergence of a novel pathogen that could cause a devastating new pandemic. Drivers for disease emergence persist and are on the rise ... [and] are compounded by factors that facilitate global spread, such as international travel and trade, inadequate global disease surveillance and control, distrust of public health authorities, health disinformation, and health system strain brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

That is why I request your support of the One Health Security Act.

A One Health Security approach works to prevent, detect and counter natural disease, accidental and deliberate threats to humans, animals, and the environment. It requires the integration of veterinary, agricultural, environmental, and human health expertise with security, foreign policy, and intelligence expertise at the local, regional, national and global levels.

The One Health Security Act will create a:

One Health Security Council: A Deputy National Security Advisor for One Health would lead a One Health Security Council within the Executive Office of the President to guide implementation of the new strategy, use of dedicated funding and strengthening on early warning networks.

One Health Security Strategy: The One Health Security Council would develop a strategy that would advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to One Health Security to enable federal agencies to cooperate more effectively.

One Health Security & Pandemic Preparedness Network: The network would support global efforts to develop a prevention, early detection and warning system for zoonotic and vector-borne disease.

One Health Security Funding: The One Health Security Council would allocate new funding for activities that would be critical to improving our biodefense and ability to defend against natural, human-generated and accidental biological events.

Please support the One Health Security Act. For more information or to commit your support, reach out to my Legislative Director, Gil Ruiz, at Gilbert_Ruiz@Gillibrand.Senate.Gov.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand

United States Senator

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