

Funding Comprehensive Vector Control

Problem: Training and research for vector-borne disease surveillance and control programs must be upgraded to mitigate the future impacts of additional exotic vector-borne diseases.

Background: In the past 20 years, the United States has seen the introduction and spread of West Nile virus, Chikungunya and Zika, in addition to the continued impact of Dengue. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Vector Borne Diseases (DVBD) obtains and allocates funding for state, county and district or municipal mosquito control programs to help support operations, build infrastructure and develop improved vector control tools which play a crucial role in the fight to protect public health.

Discussion: Since 2000, annual Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) grants from the CDC have provided money to 50 states and six large cities to detect, monitor and control over 20 mosquito-borne and tick-borne diseases. However, the funds directed to be used by individual mosquito districts for control operations was insufficient. FY 2016 and FY 2017 saw supplemental federal funds to support expanded ELC grants for arbovirus surveillance, and particularly operational control activities. These supplemental funds allowed states to prevent, rather than merely react, to vector-borne disease outbreaks by controlling the vectors themselves – and that likely helped saved lives. These funds also allowed the CDC to contract with the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA) to develop and implement a comprehensive training program to significantly enhance professional development in the knowledge of emerging vector-borne diseases and their control. This skilled vector workforce is essential to effectively and efficiently respond to any future vector-borne disease threats.

The Strengthening Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health (SMASH) Act (H.R.1310/S.849) has been introduced in the Senate and House. This legislation, which was approved in the Senate, reauthorizes the MASH Act which was designed to authorize federal funds for local governments to protect communities from mosquitoes and other disease vectors, and represents a platform for building a sustainable capacity to meet future imported exotic diseases.

The USDA IR-4 Public Health Pesticides Program (PHP) provides critical assistance to meet regulatory requirements for bringing new control tools to market, expansion of allowed use patterns, and protection of existing tools from regulatory or other challenges.

The development of new technology and evaluation of current products is essential to control disease-carrying pests. Ensuring an economically feasible process for pesticide registration, allows product developers to continue providing low-risk, effective mosquito control options – and should be encouraged.

Actions Needed:

- **Pass and fully fund all provisions of H.R.1310/S.849 Strengthening Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health Act. This amounts to \$130 million per year, FY 2019-FY 2024.**
- **Increase funding for the Division of Vector Borne Diseases (DVBD) to \$61 million for the suppression of mosquito and other vector-transmitted diseases, a \$25 million increase over FY 18 levels.**
- **Support the continuation of the IR-4 Public Health Pesticides Program (PHP) of \$350,000 to provide critical assistance for supporting vector control, including regulatory and other support needed to maintain public health and welfare.**

