

Board of Directors**Amy McDonough**
Fitbit Health Solutions at
Google (Chair)**Kristine Martin Anderson**
Booz Allen Hamilton**Bill Bernstein, Esq.**
Manatt, Phelps & Phillips,
LLP**Paul Brient**
athenahealth**Jen Covich Bordenick**
Executives for Health
Innovation**Carladenise Edwards, PhD**
Henry Ford Health System**Kristin Ficery**
Accenture**Kris Joshi, PhD**
Change Healthcare**Jeri Koester**
Marshfield Clinic Health
System**Kevin Larsen, MD**
Optum**Susan Murphy, RN**
UChicago Medicine**Adam Pellegrini**
HelloJasper**Roy Schoenberg, MD**
Am well**Josh Schoeller**
Elsevier**Laura Semlies**
Northwell Healthcare**Daniel Shaw**
CVS Health

February 4, 2022

Senator Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor & Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office
Building
Washington, DC 20510**Senator Richard Burr**
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor
& Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Burr:

Thank you for your leadership on critical public health issues with the release of the bipartisan discussion draft, the *PREVENT Pandemics Act*. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the cracks of the nation's outdated and fragmented public health system.

General Comments

EHI believes one of the most important steps to modernizing the public health system is ensuring an adequate and consistent funding stream. Too often in the past, funding authorized and appropriated by Congress for public health has been reactionary and focused on specific disease states or illnesses. The draft legislation takes an important first step in authorizing funding for activities that will help modernize the public health system; however, Congress must also commit to consistent funding so public health can keep pace with technological and societal advances, or we will be in this predicament yet again in a few years.

Specific Comments*Section 201*

EHI supports Section 201 and appreciates the Committee's focus on addressing social determinants of health (SDOH). A key aspect of addressing SDOH is ensuring there is accurate and timely data available. To that end, EHI supports adding the *LINC to Address Social Needs Act* (S. 509/H.R. 6072) to this section.

Section 211

EHI supports Section 211 as it is crucial that laboratory test information is quickly and seamlessly exchanged electronically between labs, public health authorities, and clinicians.

Section 213

EHI supports Section 213 and applauds the Committee for highlighting the importance of standards in electronic case reporting, syndromic surveillance, reporting of vital statistics, reporting test orders and results, and automated electronic reporting to public health agencies. We urge the Committee to update the language to reflect that the Secretary should not only designate standards, but also a process for recognizing or adopting updated standards. Congress should also require the Secretary to give preference to standards developed or maintained through ANSI accredited standards development organizations.

EHI also supports the establishment of health data utilities (HDUs) to support public health data availability and access. HDUs would help integrate clinical data and public health data to ensure the health care and public health systems are seamlessly integrated and more responsive to emerging threats.

Section 502

EHI supports Section 502, specifically the focus on advancing decentralized clinical trials. Decentralized trials will help improve participation and diversity in clinical trial participants. As the draft text recognizes, telehealth is a critical tool in decentralized trials, but many issues must be addressed, including state regulatory barriers such as interstate prescribing and provider licensing regulations. We urge the Committee to add specific language in Section 502 to require the Secretary to develop recommendations on how to address these state regulatory barriers.

Conclusion

EHI appreciates the work thus far on the *PREVENT Pandemics Act* and we look forward to continuing to provide input to the Committee as you look to advance legislation to modernize the nation's public health system.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Covich Bordenick