The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

November 1, 2018

Dear Secretary Azar:

We write today to offer our thanks for the National Biodefense Strategy released on September 18th, 2018 and specifically to express our support for the Strategy's goal to reduce the emergence and spread of antimicrobial-resistant pathogens domestically and internationally. The inclusion of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in this Strategy sends a powerful signal that this issue will be an important priority for this administration.

Our organizations, comprised of stakeholders from the public health, developer, consumer, provider, research, and patient communities are deeply concerned about the threat AMR poses to our biosecurity. Antimicrobial resistant pathogens complicate soldiers' wounds, exacerbate casualties associated with both natural and manmade emergencies, and could be weaponized by our nation's enemies. Moreover, AMR presents a major public health risk that jeopardizes health care gains to society that rely on the ability to effectively treat and prevent bacterial infections, such as organ transplantation, cancer chemotherapy, major surgery, and care of immunocompromised individuals and preterm infants.

We are therefore pleased to support the AMR goals and objectives in the new Biodefense Strategy. Specifically, we look forward to working with the administration on efforts to strengthen surveillance, implement stewardship and prevention strategies, advance research, and incentivize a sustainable development pipeline of urgently needed new therapeutics, diagnostics and prevention tools. According to an analysis by the Pew Charitable Trusts, our current pipeline is insufficient to meet current and anticipated needs, underscoring the need to discover and develop new drugs as well as to conserve the drugs we have. We appreciate that the Biodefense Strategy offers a framework for policy implementation, and encourage the administration to request that Congress provide dedicated funding for these activities. We also look forward to working closely with the administration to advance and implement the more detailed policies needed to achieve the AMR goals identified in the Strategy. We stand ready to assist in any way possible and hope you will call on us proactively for specific input and assistance.

As diverse stakeholders dedicated to addressing the challenge of AMR, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with Biodefense Steering Committee and/or staff to further discuss the plan and the potential to address the important challenge.

Sincerely,

AdvaMedDx

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

American Association of Avian Pathologists

American Association of Bovine Practitioners

American Association of Immunologists

American Gastroenterological Society

American Gerontological Society

American Medical Association

American Society for Microbiology

American Society for Nephrology

American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

American Thoracic Society

Antibiotic Resistance Action Center, the George Washington University

Antimicrobial Innovation Alliance

Antimicrobials Working Group (Amplyx Pharmaceuticals, Aridis Pharmaceuticals, Arsanis Inc., Cidara Therapeutics Inc., ContraFect Corporation, Entasis Therapeutics Inc., Iterum Therapeutics Ltd., Melinta Therapeutics Inc., Motif Bio plc, Nabriva Therapeutics US Inc., Paratek Pharmaceuticals Inc., SCYNEXIS Inc., Spero Therapeutics, Inc., Summit Therapeutics plc, T2 Biosystems Inc., Theravance Biopharma U.S. Inc., Viamet, Vical Incorporated, and Zavante Therapeutics Inc.)

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology

Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

bioMérieux

Biotechnology Innovation Organization

Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention

Council of State and Terriotrial Epidemiologists

Duke Center for Antimicrobial Stewardship and Infection Prevention

Emory Antibiotic Resistance Center

Fecal Transplant Foundation

Foundation to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance

GlaxoSmithKline

Infectious Diseases Society of America

Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security

The Joint Commission

Making-A-Difference in Infectious Diseases

March of Dimes

Merck

National Association of City and County Health Officials

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Athletic Trainers Association

NovaDigm Therapeutics

ONCORD Inc.

Peggy Lillis Foundation

The Pew Charitable Trusts

Renal Physicians Association

Roche Diagnostics Corporation

Sepsis Alliance

Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America

Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists

Spero Therapeutics

Trust for America's Health

cc: John Bolton, National Security Advisor of the United States, The White House
cc: Jeff Sessions, United States Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice
cc: James Mattis, Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense
cc: Thomas McCaffery, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, U.S. Department of Defense
cc: Kirstjen Nielsen, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
cc: Sonny Perdue, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
cc: Robert Wilkie, Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
cc: Andrew Wheeler, Acting Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
cc: Robert Kadlec, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

cc: Robert Redfield, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention