

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 13, 2023

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra:

We write to express concern over the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile's (SNS) reliance on foreign countries for medical countermeasures (MCMs) and urge you to prioritize American domiciled pharmaceutical manufacturing for the state of our national health security preparedness. As Americans continue to face drug shortages, including shortages of lifesaving antibiotics like Amoxicillin, it is clear that Congress must take an active role in rebuilding our nation's pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity.

We recognize the SNS as a key component of our nation's medical response infrastructure, serving as the federal government's primary repository of MCMs. The SNS' multibillion dollar inventory is critical to protecting American lives in the event of a public health emergency. However, our SNS is far too dependent on foreign countries for medication, supplies, and more, especially China and India. If one of these foreign countries were to cut off the supply of drugs or active pharmaceutical ingredients, American lives could hang in the balance.

It wasn't until the COVID pandemic that Americans saw firsthand the supply chain vulnerabilities that come from our nation's heavy reliance on imports. Hospitals suddenly ran short of face masks, medical gloves, and critical medicines such as antibiotics and antivirals. The situation got even worse after China and other countries banned exports of essential pharmaceuticals in order to maintain supplies at home.

As a result, we strongly urge you to prioritize the use of federal taxpayer dollars for the procurement and distribution of American domiciled pharmaceutical manufacturing for medical countermeasures that meets high-quality standards from established, proven, and vetted suppliers in future purchases. Central to this strategy is the sustainment of domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing; a recent report by the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) recommends leveraging the federal government's collective buying power to provide stable, long-term demand for U.S.-made essential medicines. Prioritizing the acquisition of medical countermeasures manufactured in America, including lifesaving antibiotics, will help to reduce our reliance on foreign countries, head off potential supply chain disruptions, and ensure a steady supply of pharmaceuticals in the event of future public health emergencies or natural disasters.

Supportive of Congress' effort to prioritize the domestic manufacturing of essential drugs, personal protection equipment (PPE), diagnostics, and medical equipment, we wish to draw attention to the explanatory statement of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 (P.L. 117-328). The following text, which indicates the intent of the enacted appropriations for the SNS, may be found in the explanatory statement as reflected in S8894 of the Congressional Record:

Made in America Strategic National Stockpile. - The agreement notes concern about the nation's limited infrastructure to produce essential products such as medical devices, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, and PPE, such as syringes. The agreement strongly urges the Secretary to develop a

long-term sustainable procurement plan that gives preference to and results in purchases directly from domestic manufacturers of PPE or PPE raw materials to the maximum extent practicable.

With this explanatory statement in mind, we urge the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to identify concrete ways in which American domiciled pharmaceutical companies, including American domiciled and owned manufacturers of antibiotics, may be given priority over foreign companies for government procurement. Prioritizing American made manufacturing of essential medicines will be a lifesaving practice for the United States.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward your response on how to ensure we are prioritizing American-made products.

Sincerely,



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress




Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



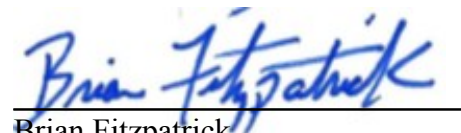
A. Drew Ferguson IV
Member of Congress



Ronny L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Nancy Mace
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

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Mike Carey
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large 'J' and 'G' with a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colón
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large 'D' and 'G' with a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress