

FY2025 Appropriations for the National Wastewater Surveillance System

February 7, 2025

Dear Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Collins and Vice Chair Murray,

The undersigned organizations urge the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to support at least a \$20 million increase for the National Wastewater Surveillance System within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Emerging Infectious Diseases program at the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Disease (NCEZID) in the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Labor, Health, Human Service and Education (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill, allowing the CDC to detect and track emerging infectious diseases.

The CDC's Emerging Infectious Disease program protects Americans from outbreaks by building and sustaining public health laboratory capacity, developing diagnostic tests for emerging infectious diseases and responding to emerging outbreaks. The National Wastewater Surveillance System works in concert with these programs, serving as an early warning system for outbreaks. An increase of \$20 million for Emerging Infectious Diseases will allow the CDC to maintain wastewater surveillance in a limited number of states.

Wastewater monitoring allows public health professionals and communities to react in real-time to prevent disease spread. By identifying the presence of pathogens without the need for individuals to be tested or to show symptoms of infections. The CDC is currently using wastewater surveillance to monitor highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1), allowing public health officials to detect outbreaks without patients seeking clinical care.

The National Wastewater Surveillance System program began as a pilot program under the 2020 CARES Act and was expanded with supplemental funding through subsequent legislation addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, wastewater surveillance has continued to be a critical tool in detecting and monitoring infectious diseases including seasonal flu, mpox, and RSV. CDC has been able to build limited surveillance capacity through supplemental funding; however, without adequate base funding, the agency will not be able to maintain a national surveillance program. We urge you to include at least \$20 million in additional funding to the Emerging Infectious Diseases program in the final FY25 Labor-HHS appropriations bill and we look forward to working with you on this important topic.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,