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July 27, 2011

The Honorable Fred Upton
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Waxman:

On behalf of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a professional organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, I write to thank you for your efforts to ensure that our nation is prepared in the event of a disaster or public health emergency through H.R.2405, the *Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act (PAHPRA) of 2011*.

Representing twenty-five percent of the U.S. population, children are not little adults. Their developing minds and bodies place them at disproportionate risk during a disaster situation. Children are particularly vulnerable to aerosolized biological or chemical agents because they breathe more times per minute than adults and they are more vulnerable to agents that act on or through the skin because their skin is thinner and they have a larger surface-to-mass ratio than adults. Children need different dosages of medicine than adults, not only because they are smaller, but also because certain drugs and biologics may have different or unanticipated effects on developing children. From needles and tubing, to oxygen masks and ventilators, to imaging and laboratory technology, children need medical equipment that has been specifically designed for their size and unique physiology.

Despite progress in recent years to improve available countermeasures for children such as the development of a pediatric oral formulation in a Project BioShield contract for an antiviral drug to treat smallpox and a recent public engagement workshop on anthrax vaccine for children led by the National Biodefense Science Board's Anthrax Vaccine Working Group, significant gaps remain in the availability of countermeasures that can be safely delivered in the right dose, formulation, and at the right time for our nation's children. The National Commission on Children and Disasters found in its October 2010 report, "...the quantity of pediatric medical countermeasures (MCM) in the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is very limited." The Commission went on to say, "It is critical that the Federal Government take all steps necessary to remedy fully these gaps in coverage for children currently present within the SNS, in addition to ensuring that MCM developed and approved in the future have pediatric indications, dosages, and formulations."

The AAP appreciates your efforts to improve the nation's preparedness for children. We would also like to commend the leadership of Representatives Anna Eshoo and Ed Markey for language in the bill related to the needs of pediatric populations in the

Countermeasure Implementation Plan as well as language that helps address the preparedness and surge capacity of hospitals for pediatric and other at-risk populations. The AAP welcomes the opportunity to work with you as the bill moves forward to strengthen the legislation for children.

As we approach the ten-year anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, we are reminded of the need to enhance our nation's preparedness for the most vulnerable of Americans, our children.

Thank you for your dedication to the health and well-being of children.

Sincerely,

/s/

O. Marion Burton, MD, FAAP
President

cc The Honorable Joe Pitts
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
The Honorable Anna Eshoo
The Honorable Ed Markey

OMB/tmh