

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

We respectfully request that you include the following amendment to S.3548, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. This amendment would establish a Special Adviser to the President for Global Health Security, who would lead a Global Health Security directorate at the White House National Security Council.

Pandemic preparedness is a vital national security interest, which the coronavirus outbreak has made clear. Strong and consistent senior leadership at the National Security Council is necessary to direct a whole-of-government response to a global health crisis. That is why, following the Ebola outbreak, the Obama administration established a directorate at the National Security Council to prepare for and respond to pandemic threats. This provision would help ensure the United States is better prepared for the next global health emergency.

S. 3548

To provide emergency assistance and health care response for individuals, families, and businesses affected by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.

Referred to the Committee on _____ and ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT INTENDED TO BE PROPOSED BY MR. VAN HOLLEN (FOR HIMSELF AND MR. KING)

Viz:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. __. GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY SPECIAL ADVISOR.

(a) In General.—There is established, within the Executive Office of the President, the position of Special Advisor for Global Health Security (referred to in this section as the “Advisor”), who shall be appointed by the President, at a level not lower than that of a Senior Director of the National Security Council.

(b) General Duties.—The Advisor shall—

(1) serve as the President's principal advisor on global health security and global health emergencies; and

(2) coordinate the United States Government's efforts to carry out global health security activities, including participation in the Global Health Security Agenda.

(c) Specific Duties.—The duties of the Advisor shall also include—

(1) ensuring program and policy coordination among the relevant executive branch agencies and nongovernmental organizations, including auditing, monitoring, and evaluation of all such programs;

(2) ensuring that each relevant executive branch agency undertakes programs primarily in areas in which the agency has the greatest expertise, technical capabilities, and potential for success;

(3) avoiding duplication of effort;

(4) ensuring, through interagency and international coordination, that global health security programs of the United States are coordinated with, and complementary to, the delivery of related global health, food security, development, and education programs;

(5) establishing due diligence criteria for all recipients of funds appropriated by the Federal Government for global health security assistance;

(6) developing policy that will prioritize global health security, especially the role of building low- and middle-income country capacity to contain pandemic threats, in all relevant future global and national health, research and development, and biodefense strategies, including the National Health Security Strategy, the National Security Strategy, and the National Biodefense Strategy; and

(7) articulating assessment standards that—

(A) measure countries' individual status and progress in building the necessary capacities to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease threats, in accordance with agreed bilateral or multilateral targets, and in support of full implementation of the International Health Regulations, adopted at Geneva May 23, 2005;

(B) are based on a peer-to-peer model in which external experts are invited to work with the country to evaluate capacity;

(C) ensure an objective approach and facilitate cross-sectoral learning; and

(D) are part of the capacity building cycle designed to inform national priority setting, target resources, and track progress.

(d) Coordination.—In carrying out the duties set forth in subsection (b), the Advisor shall ensure the coordination of United States Government efforts referred to in subsection (b)(2) with relevant international stakeholders and organizations.

(e) Monitoring.—To ensure that adequate measures are established and implemented, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention should—

(1) advise the Advisor on monitoring, surveillance, and evaluation activities; and

(2) be a key implementer of such activities under this section.

(f) Defined Term.—In this section, the term “global health security” means the activities required to minimize the danger and impact of acute public health events that endanger the collective health of populations living across geographical regions and international boundaries.

(g) Conforming Amendment.—Section 101 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3021) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

“(h) Global Health Security Directorate.—The Council shall have a Global Health Security Directorate, headed by the Special Advisor for Global Health Security, which shall coordinate the United States Government’s efforts to carry out global health security activities, including participation in the Global Health Security Agenda.”.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Angus King
United States Senator