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Brooks, Eshoo Legislation Heads to President's Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, the House of Representatives passed bipartisan legislation, the *Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act (PAHPA)*, authored by Reps. Susan W. Brooks (R-IN05) and Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA18) to strengthen the country's existing preparedness and response programs. The bill now heads to the President's desk to be signed into law.

"The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act is critically important legislation that works to make our nation better prepared for and able to keep Americans safer in response to natural disasters or biological, chemical, radiological or nuclear threats to our public health and national security," Brooks said. "I am proud this bipartisan legislation is now on its way to the President's desk to be signed into law because it will ensure our health care professionals are trained to respond to possible pandemic outbreaks, prioritize the further development of our national stockpile of vaccines, medical equipment and diagnostics, and establish new advisory groups focused on protecting vulnerable populations such as senior citizens and people with disabilities during public health threats and emergencies."

"The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act better equips our federal agencies to respond to new and emerging threats that jeopardize our national security and public health," Eshoo said. "I applaud the House and Senate's bipartisan commitment to strengthening our nation's existing preparedness and response programs, and I look forward to the President signing this important bill into law."

BACKGROUND

The Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act (PAHPA) ensures our nation is prepared to respond to a wide range of public health emergencies, whether man-made or occurring through a natural disaster or infectious disease. PAHPA strengthens and improves our national preparedness and response for public health emergencies through our hospitals, state and local health providers, and by accelerating medical countermeasure research and development. Specifically, the legislation focuses on the needs of special populations including children, people with disabilities and seniors before and during a public health emergency. It codifies the Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasure Enterprise and the duties of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), while maintaining the important role of the Centers for Disease Control in emergency and response activities. The legislation also provides the authorization and federal resources to invest in programs related to Pandemic Influenza and Emerging Infectious Diseases.

In addition, *PAHPA* reauthorizes funding to improve bioterrorism and other public health emergency preparedness and response activities such as the Hospital Preparedness Program, the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement, Project BioShield, and BARDA for the advanced research and development of medical countermeasures (MCMs). *PAHPA* previously expired on September 30, 2018.

Brooks and Eshoo are co-founders of the Congressional Biodefense Caucus. The Caucus serves as a platform to educate Members of Congress and their staff on the very real threats our nation faces from a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack or pandemic outbreak. It also aims to identify the existing gaps in our preparedness and response capabilities.

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