



FUNDING PRIORITIES TO PROTECT AMERICA FROM MOSQUITO AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES

ISSUE: Last February, The National Public Health Strategy to Prevent and Control Vector-Borne Diseases in People was delivered to Congress, fulfilling a key requirement of the Kay Hagan Tick Act. To achieve the objectives laid out in the strategy, such as reducing the number of cases of Lyme disease and West Nile virus neuroinvasive disease, the nation's scientists and vector management professionals need the resources and infrastructure to understand what diseases are circulating where and respond accordingly.

The challenge posed by VBDs only continues to grow with time, with Lyme disease continuing to spread into places it has not previously been detected such as Mississippi and Alabama, a growing burden from alpha-gal syndrome which is thought to be far more common than is currently being reported, other diseases like Eastern Equine Encephalitis being detected in the New England region in addition to Malaria in the South, and ongoing outbreaks of Dengue and Oropouche virus in the Caribbean. Fortunately, the CDC runs critical programs to help address these challenges at the regional, state, and local levels.

CDC Regional Centers of Excellence (COE) and Training and Evaluation Centers (TEC) in Vector-Borne Diseases: In 2022, four COEs were reauthorized and cover New England, the Southeast, the Midwest, and the Southwest. The COEs play a unique and critical role in the coordination between academic institutions and state and local health departments to accelerate dissemination of information into the communities, support surveillance efforts, promote outreach, education, and workforce development. Building on the success of the COE model, the CDC created an expansion of this program called TECs in 2023. These new TECs are creating hub and spokes in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic, Southern Delta, Rockies, and Caribbean/Pacific islands. Together these programs have increased our knowledge of VBDs and created partnerships across the U.S., Caribbean, and Pacific islands between public health programs.

CDC Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) grant program: ELC funding is critical for efforts related to the surveillance, detection, response, and prevention of infectious diseases, including VBD. In 2023, CDC's DVBD received requests for more than \$31 million from the state departments of health. However, the Division was only able to support \$17 million using a mix of FY 2023 appropriated ELC funds and rollover funds. The Kay Hagan TICK Act authorized an additional \$20 million over the FY 2019 level, \$10.0 million at that time, and thus would be \$30.0 million total for FY 2026. So far, only about \$6 million of that \$20 million authorized increase has been appropriated with the FY 2025 level. The ELC program provides critical capacity for mosquito control programs and expands the nationwide surveillance of vector-borne disease.

CDC Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria (DPDM): The CDC's origin revolved around eradicating malaria from the U.S., which it succeeded in doing. But the mosquitoes that spread malaria are still here. The 10 cases of locally transmitted malaria in 2023, the first in 20 years in the U.S., demonstrate that support for being prepared for future cases domestically is critical. This becomes even more critical as we are seeing new invasive malaria mosquitoes in other countries



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that are insecticide resistant and thrive in urban areas, in addition to the nearly 2,000 cases of travel-associated malaria cases in the U.S.

In addition to supporting work on malaria, the DPDM works domestically to protect Americans from other vector-borne disease parasites like those which spread African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), babesiosis, chagas disease, and leishmaniasis through monitoring, studying insecticide resistance to develop better tools, and research and evaluation for other strategies to prevent bites from these insects and arthropods. The VBDN requests flat funding with FY 2026 at \$29 million for the DPDM.

Data Modernization: AMCA expresses our appreciation for the strong, ongoing Congressional support for data modernization at the CDC in recent years. Sustained support for data infrastructure will be critical to modernize healthcare in this nation as public health data currently remains siloed from other health care data. As diseases and insects do not respect county, state, or territorial boundaries, a robust data infrastructure will be the only way to meaningfully protect the U.S. against future biological threats. This funding will lead to better detection of emerging outbreaks. The AMCA request is \$114.603 million for the CDC's Division of Vector-Borne Diseases (DVBD). Included within this is a request for an increase of \$10.0 million in ELC funding for VectorSurv, as well as \$14 million more for VBD ELC support to fulfill the vision of the Kay Hagan Tick Act.

VectorSurv enhances capacity for mosquito control activities and expands nationwide surveillance of vector-borne disease. VectorSurv currently supports 14 states and the U.S.-affiliated Pacific islands for coordinated surveillance, control, and abatement activities which fit within the \$100 million authorized increase through the Strengthening Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health (SMASH) provisions in the All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act of 2019 (P.L. 116-22). AMCA requests an additional \$10 million through ELC funding to continue and grow support and engagement with VectorSurv.

NEEDED ACTIONS:

We urge you to provide at least \$11.581 billion for CDC in the FY 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bills. In particular, within the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Disease (NCEZID), at least \$114.603 million in funding for the Division of Vector-Borne Diseases (DVBD). Included within this ask is a requested increase in support for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) program to support states' work on vector-borne diseases (VBD) with \$10.0 million dedicated for VectorSurv, and sustained funding to continue to support the CDC Regional Centers of Excellence on Vector-Borne Diseases (COEs) as well as the Training and Evaluation Centers (TECs).
