



**American College of Physicians  
Response to the  
Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) Request for Information  
February 23, 2026**

The American College of Physicians (ACP) urges Congress to reauthorize the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA). Reauthorizing PAHPA presents an opportunity to make sustainable and thoughtful updates to our nation's preparedness programs so that the United States can prevent and manage future public health emergencies (PHEs) quickly and effectively. **The College is supportive of a comprehensive pandemic preparedness plan and policies to bolster the country's supply chain, health care system, and public health data sharing capabilities.**

ACP is the largest medical specialty organization and the second largest physician membership society in the United States. ACP members include 163,000 internal medicine physicians, related subspecialists, and medical students. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge, clinical expertise, and compassion to the preventive, diagnostic, and therapeutic care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness.

In ACP's policy paper, [\*Preparing for Future Pandemics and Public Health Emergencies\*](#), **we recommended that Congress sufficiently and consistently fund and support pandemic preparedness and that the federal government develop and maintain a comprehensive and unified federal pandemic preparedness and response plan.** It is critical that the plan cut across agencies and levels of government and incorporate feedback and input from relevant stakeholders, including physicians. **ACP believes that PAHPA reauthorization is essential to improving the country's unified preparedness approach.**

**1. Suggestions for the following USG programs:**

- **Strategic National Stockpile (SNS):** *The College supports the SNS.* We urge Congress to support policies that would facilitate collaboration between the federal government with state and local governments and hospitals to ensure that the SNS's capacity is sufficient to respond to future pandemics.
- **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC):** *The College strongly supports the MRC as an approach to fostering adequate surge capacity in health care settings during PHEs.* The MRC, a national network of about 200,000 volunteers, plays an important role in providing health care support, infection prevention, vaccination administration, personal protective equipment (PPE) distribution, medical surge missions, and contact tracing.

A pronounced recruitment challenge exists for medical professionals due to limited awareness of MRC and a lack of understanding of the value of workforce surge capacity. Approximately 36 percent of MRC volunteers are nonmedical

volunteers, and 28 percent are nurse volunteers, whereas only 5 percent are physician volunteers. ***In addition to funding, education campaigns are necessary to recruit additional physicians and other medical and public health professionals to serve in the MRC.*** ACP recognizes that, while ideal, maintaining a physician reserve may be challenging given existing workforce shortages and implores Congress to explore approaches that utilize the current workforce in different capacities.

**2. Policy suggestions that do not fit within the currently authorized programs or initiatives from #1**

- When looking at approaches to mitigate the potential harmful effects of future PHEs, it is essential to examine policies that would strengthen the country's public health infrastructure. In ACP's published policy paper, [Modernizing the United States' Public Health Infrastructure](#), we provided recommendations for improving the country's public health data sharing capabilities.

Assessment and surveillance are core components of public health infrastructure. Public health departments rely on data from physicians, hospitals, laboratories, and others to make informed decisions, measure the health of the community, detect emerging threats, and track how certain populations are affected by health disparities and social drivers of health. However, public health lacks common data standards, interoperable systems to share information, and the capability to share data in real-time.

***The College supports the development of a modern national public health data infrastructure capable of real-time bidirectional data sharing.*** Efforts to allow information sharing among health care and public health entities should include strong patient privacy and confidentiality protections and establish clear, understandable, adaptable, and enforceable rules on how data will be used. ***ACP supports investments in traditional and emerging epidemiology technologies, such as wastewater surveillance, which was used during the COVID-19 pandemic to successfully track disease outbreaks and direct resources where they were most needed.*** We support Section 204 in the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Response Act (PAHPARA), [S. 2333](#), that would establish a pilot program for public health data availability. The pilot would provide support to state and regional public health departments to track situational awareness activities and improve coordination across the Department of Health and Human Services so that deidentified, aggregated data on potentially catastrophic infectious disease outbreaks can be made publicly available close to real-time.

**3. Views on if any of the programs or initiatives are duplicative to already existing efforts**

- n/a

**4. Top three priorities of 2023 PAHPA Reauthorization in order of preference.**

- Funding and targeted physician recruitment for MRC.
- Funding for SNS.

- Funding for a pilot program for public health data availability, to support a modern national public health data infrastructure capable of real-time bidirectional data sharing.

We hope that our response to the PAHPA RFI serves as a resource for Congress as it considers bipartisan policies to include in the final PAHPA reauthorization package. We greatly appreciate Dr. Dunn and Rep. Trahan's leadership in PAHPA reauthorization to ensure the safety and well-being of Americans across the country. If you have any questions or need additional information from ACP, please contact Vy Oxman, Senior Associate of Legislative Affairs, at 202-261-4515 or [voxman@acponline.org](mailto:voxman@acponline.org).