



June 8, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
Senate Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Nomination of Dawn O'Connell

Dear Senator Murray and Senator Burr,

BIO would like to formally support the nomination of Dawn O'Connell to serve as the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). The Biotechnology Innovation Organization ("BIO") is the world's largest trade association representing biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers, and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. BIO members have a long history of successful partnerships with the ASPR office and look forward to continuing to do so under the leadership of Ms. O'Connell.

The ASPR is vital to the health security of the nation, now in a pandemic environment more than ever. Fully utilizing the powers and scope of the ASPR office through strong leadership and clear vision will best prepare the US for the next pandemic, as we emerge from the current one, by directing lifesaving investments in research, development, and procurement through the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) and delivering key medical products in emergencies to the American people through the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The ASPR has the ability to spur innovation and take on complex health issues, and Dawn O'Connell is exceptionally qualified to fulfill the vital duties of the office.

Ms. O'Connell is an expert in preparedness and a lifelong advocate for health policy. Having worked with her in her capacity at the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation (CEPI), BIO has firsthand knowledge of that expertise. She was successful at CEPI in balancing the interests of industry with insightful and equitable public health policies. She has experience in both domestic and international preparedness, and that background will help ensure the US has capabilities and capacity to be a global leader in pandemic response.

Additionally, Ms. O'Connell played a leading role in the Obama Administration's health and humanitarian response on issues such as Ebola and Zika, as well as unaccompanied children and refugees. She has worked with international government leaders and federal and



private partners to resolve key policy challenges, leading efforts to contain and control challenges and outbreaks before they escalate to crises.

Leading ASPR is a challenging position in a normal year, and to be nominated while in the midst of a pandemic is a one-of-a-kind challenge. BIO believes that Ms. O'Connell has the experience needed to be successful in this role, and that she fully understands the importance and capabilities of the office of the ASPR. For these reasons, BIO fully supports her nomination.

Phyllis A Arthur

Sincerely,

Phyllis Arthur