

Date: June 30, 2015

Connect, Create, Educate

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Dear Mr President:

On behalf of the community of One Health advocates and stakeholders, the One Health Commission, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and the signatories below, writes to urge creation of One Health platforms in both the United States (U.S) and the United Nations (U.N).

As the seven U.S. senators (February 12, 2015 letter to you), the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA, letter of March 12, 2015) and the American Public Health Association (APHA, letter of May 21, 2015) have noted, the One Health Commission is acutely aware of the consequences of operating in separate health professional 'silos'. Within the past century many of those working within our human and animal health systems have evolved from generalist 'healers' to highly trained specialists within discrete areas of medical practice. While specialization has resulted in targeted research and applications that have significantly advanced our medical knowledge and health, that narrowing of focus means that we sometimes miss the larger picture. Without a keen awareness of the interconnectedness of human, animal, plant and environmental health, our current systems are ineffective and unsustainable, unable to prevent illness and protect our health even with specialized treatments for diseases and metabolic conditions. Human, animal, plant and environmental health professionals do not routinely have the opportunity to attend each other's continuing education events, read each other's journals or interact directly. It is small wonder that we find it so difficult to share information and expertise to collectively address One Health issues that fall at the interface of our professions.

Just what should the White House do? We respectfully submit the following suggestions for establishing One Health platforms in the U.S. and the U.N.

- 1. At the Federal level, create a standing, U.S. Inter-Agency One Health Committee that would regularly convene relevant Federal agencies to address One Health issues. This could evolve from the Federal Inter-Agency One Health Working Group, a long-standing informal group of individual One Health advocates who are based within several Federal Agencies. These Inter-Agency One Health Committee meetings could include participation from the general One Health stakeholder community, much as the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine) conducts workshops and consensus studies.
- 2. At the State level, create One Health standing committees to collectively convene, several times a year, human, animal, environmental, plant and population health (and other supporting disciplines) stakeholders to strengthen statewide trans-

professional relationships and collaborations. Some states have already begun this process on their own, led by their State public health officers; but without funding, legal mandates or incentives, they have found it difficult to attract many of the needed players to the discussion table.

3. The U.N. could create an International One Health Standing Committee that convenes at least once a year to discuss One Health approaches to critical global health concerns such as antimicrobial resistance and the health impacts of climate change. Solutions to the many 'wicked' problems of our times will require not only transprofessional collaborations but also trans-continental and trans-country partnerships. Lacking a formal international legislative One Health framework, a number of groups have begun these conversations on their own. During the last six years, three biennial International One Health Congresses have been held in Australia (2011), Thailand (2013) and Amsterdam (2015). In April, 2014, the iCOMOS (International Conference on One Medicine-One Science) was hosted by the University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, Academic Health Center and Office of the Vice President for Research, in partnership with allied national and international agencies. Facilitating international collaborations for addressing the threat of emerging zoonotic diseases, food- and water-borne pathogens, and challenges in environmental health, iCOMOS encouraged engagement between health policymakers and scientific experts. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> International One Health Congress in Amsterdam (March, 2015), nearly 900 researchers from 50 countries critically discussed the interconnectedness of human, animal and environmental health. In addition to health professionals, individuals with expertise in political science, economics and other social sciences attended to discuss and frame One Health societal issues. Most recently, in May 2015, the World Veterinary Association (WVA) and the World Medical Association (WMA), in collaboration with the Spanish Medical and Veterinary Associations, held a global, joint One Health Conference in Madrid, Spain.

Collaborations do not just spontaneously happen; they start with relationships. And relationships do not just magically form, they start when we meet each other and begin interactive conversations. No one profession, no one region or country can know everything or have all the answers to today's global health challenges. It will require awareness of each other's strengths and great humility to admit that we all play small but integral parts in solving today's global health problems. We must acknowledge our differences while respecting the perspectives and opinions that others bring to the table. We entreat you, for the greater global public and environmental health, to help us make these much needed conversations 'across our silos' happen. The One Health Commission, the One Health Initiative website team, and many groups of academic and individual One Health advocates in the US and around the world, stand ready to engage to further develop these platforms. A wealth of energy, talent and creative thinking has sprung from nearly 15 years of One Health discussions that seek to resurrect this very old concept.

Thank you, in advance, for your attention to our urgent call. One Health approaches truly are a 'Ray of Hope' for the future health of our planet and all its living creatures.

Respectfully,

The One Health Commission And the greater community of One Health Advocates

## Signatories: Groups/Organizations

#### American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) https://www.aamc.org/

• Ray Mitchel, MD

#### American Association of Public Health Physicians (AAPHP) http://www.aaphp.org/

- Ryung Suh MD, MPP, MBA, MPH, President 2014-2016
- Katrina Rhodes, MD, MS, President-Elect
- Virginia Dato MD, MPH, President 2012-2014
- Kevin Sherin MD, MPH, President 2008-2010
- Dave Cundiff MD, MPH, President 2000-2002

- Joel L. Nitzkin, MD, MPH, DPA, President 1996-1998
- Poornima Oruganti, AAPHP Medical Student Liaison Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, MPH Candidate 2016 Northeast Ohio Medical University, MD Candidate 2017

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- Megan Latshaw, PhD, MHS, Chair-Elect
- Christopher L. Rea, PhD, MPH, Climate Change & Health Topic Committee Co-Chair
- Jeni Miller, PhD, Climate Change & Health Topic Committee Co-Chair
- Liz Perera, MEM, MPH, Climate Change & Health Topic Committee Co-Chair
- Kim Knowlton, DrPH, Climate Change & Health Topic Committee Past Chair

## American Public Health Association (APHA)

## Veterinary Public Health Special Primary Interest Group

- Thomas J. Doker, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, CPH, Chair
- Jeein Chung, DVM, MPH, Immediate Past-Chair
- James Dale, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, Past-Chair
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- Catherine Machalaba, MPH, Policy Chair
- Venita Ramirez, MPH, CPH, Communications Committee Chair
- Thomas Edward Gecewicz, CHO, MPA, CHWM, SSI, PHL, Member-at-Large
- Hayley D. Yaglom, MS, MPH, Outreach Committee Chair, Vector-borne/Zoonotic Disease Epidemiologist, Arizona Department of Health Services

## American Veterinary Epidemiology Society (AVES)

- Dr. Charles Thoen, President
- Dr. Craig Carter, President-Elect, Executive Director

## Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) www.aavmc.org

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BioKansas http://www.biokansas.org/s/1559/start.aspx

• Dennis Ridenour, MS, MBA, President & CEO

## Boo Radley Foundation, <a href="http://www.booradleyfoundation.org/">http://www.booradleyfoundation.org/</a>

George K. (Ken) Johnson, Jr, President

## Colorado State University http://www.colostate.edu/

• Point of Contact: Alan S. Rudolph, PhD, MBA, Vice President for Research, Colorado State University

## Elizabeth R. Griffin Research Foundation, <u>http://www.ergriffinresearch.org/about/news.php</u>

• Gavin Macgregor-Skinner, BVSc, MSc, MPH, MRCVS, Global Projects Manager

## Georgetown University Medical Center (GUMC) https://gumc.georgetown.edu/

• Dan Lucey, MD, MPH

## International Association of Human Animal Interaction Organizations (IAHAIO) <u>www.iahaio.org</u>

**Board of Directors** (representing 76 member organizations of 125,000 people)

- Rebecca A. Johnson, PhD, RN, FAAN, FNAP, President
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- Keiko Yamazaki, Board Member at Large

## International Congress on Pathogens at the Human Animal Interface (ICOPHAI) https://icophai.org

- Wondwossen Gebreyes, DVM, PhD, Chair
- Thomas Shryock, PhD, Senior Research Advisor

## International Medical Corps https://internationalmedicalcorps.org/

- International Medical Corp, as a leading member on the NGO Steering Committee for the Global Health Security Agenda, recognizes the importance of establishing One Health platforms at the highest level of governance. We are committed to helping protect the world from infectious disease threats through establishing a global affinity network for health security through communication platforms between non-governmental stakeholders and governments worldwide. We are therefore pleased to sign the attached letter to the White House in support of the One Health Commission.
- Ambassador William Garvelink (ret)

## Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute (KCALSI) www.kclifesciences.org

• Wayne O. Carter, DVM, PhD, DACVIM, President and CEO, Kansas City, MO 64108

## North Carolina One Health Collaborative

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## The Ohio State University Global One Health Task-Force (and Local Supporters) https://u.osu.edu/onehealth/

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## One Health Organization, Gates Mills, Ohio http://onehealth.org/

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The Veterinary Diagnosticians at the Penn State Animal Diagnostic Laboratory support and Co-sign the letter to the US Congress to act and promote "One Health".

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