VECTOR-BORNE
DISEASE NETWORK

March 17, 2026

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, Chairman Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

The Vector-Borne Disease Network (VBDN) is a stakeholder group of nonprofit organizations, research groups, and small businesses led by the Entomological Society of America (ESA) that aims to reduce human and animal suffering caused by arthropod disease vectors. Many notorious public health threats such as Lyme disease, malaria, West Nile virus, anaplasmosis, and Alpha-gal syndrome are transmitted by arthropod vectors like ticks and mosquitoes. Threats to public health resulting in disease, disability, or death are biosecurity threats, and the central tenets to preventing them are risk management, monitoring, and developing new mitigants. We urge you to provide **at least $11.581 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the fiscal year (FY) 2027 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bills**.

More specific to the VBDN's focus in vector-borne diseases, we ask that you provide, within the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Disease (NCEZID), ***at least* $153.603 million in funding for the Division of Vector-Borne Diseases (DVBD).** Included within this ask is sustained funding for *Lyme disease*, a requested increase in support for the *Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC)* program to support states' work on vector-borne diseases (VBD), and sustained funding to continue to support the *CDC Regional Centers of Excellence on Vector-Borne Diseases (COEs)* as well as the *Training & Evaluation Centers (TECs)***.** Also included in this is ***at least* $39 million for malaria** which is proposed for reorganization into the DVBD.

We are very appreciative of the FY 2026 funding of $91.6 million in appropriations for the DVBD. In February 2024, *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*. However, the strategy is just the beginning. 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 community of 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 spreading ever further 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, emerging diseases like Heartland virus and Bourbon virus being detected in the mid-Atlantic region in addition to the Midwest and South, and a growing number of locally transmitted cases of dengue. Fortunately, CDC runs critical programs to help address these challenges at the regional, state, and local levels.

Regional Centers of Excellence and Training & Evaluation Centers in Vector-Borne Diseases
In 2022, four Centers of Excellence (COEs) on VBDs were authorized following a competition. These centers, covering *New England, the Southeast, the Midwest, and the Pacific Southwest*, play a unique and critical role in the coordination between academic institutions and state and local health departments to accelerate dissemination of research findings and information into the communities, support surveillance efforts, and promote outreach, education, and workforce development.

Building on the success of the COE model, the CDC created an expansion of this program called Training & Evaluation Centers (TECs) in 2023. The TEC program is continuing to grow those relationships focused on translating and disseminating research findings to the public health community. The TECs model hub and spokes in *the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic, Southern Delta, Rockies, and Caribbean/Pacific islands*. The VBDN is highly appreciative of the continued support for the COEs and TECS, which help connect and bridge previously more siloed partners to increase the research, training, and coordination capacity across all partners to manage the growing public health threat of VBDs across these regions.

CDC Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Grants
ELC funding is critical for efforts related to the surveillance, detection, response, and prevention of infectious diseases, including VBD. In 2025, CDC's DVBD received requests for more than $30 million from the state departments of health for VBD through the ELC program. However, the Division was only able to support $17 million, a little more than half of the amount needed.

In 2019, 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 2027. So far, only about $7 million of that $20 million authorized increase has been appropriated with the FY 2026 level.

Another program that is helping bring together surveillance and prevention through data modernization efforts, breaking down the silos between healthcare providers and public health, is an internet-based program and database called VectorSurv. This program 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). The VBDN requests an additional **$10 million** through ELC funding to continue and grow support and engagement with VectorSurv.

Malaria Reorganization

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., and multiple local cases in 2025, demonstrate that support to remain prepared for future cases domestically is critical. This becomes even more essential as we are seeing new invasive malaria mosquitoes in other countries that are insecticide resistant and thrive in urban areas, on top of the more than 2,000 cases of travel-associated malaria cases in the U.S. each year.

The Division of Parasitic Diseases and Malaria (DPDM) was under the CDC's Global Health Center, but internal reorganization has broken the DPDM up. Furthermore, due to the elimination of USAID last year, which funded half of the malaria work done in the US and abroad, half of the funding disappeared, but the need for expertise, capacity, and lab facilities to do research and testing did not go away. Additionally, these labs protect Americans from other vector-borne disease parasites like those which spread babesia, 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 **$39 million** for malaria and other global and domestic related diseases now also being housed the DVBD.

In total, the VBDN request for FY 2027 is ***at least* $153.603 million** for the CDC's Division of Vector-Borne Diseases (DVBD). Included within this is a request for

- $13 million more for VBD ELC support to fulfill the vision of the *Kay Hagan Tick Act*
- $10.0 million in funding for VectorSurv
- $10 million more for malaria and other global VBDs

for a total of **$126.603 million for the VBD line**, and ***at least* $27.0 million for Lyme disease**. This would help support the collaborative efforts of more than a dozen federal agencies efforts to fulfill the vision laid out in the National Strategy on VBD and help meet the needs of states and protect people across the U.S.

CDC is the first line of defense for our nation's health, safety, and security, and it is crucial that the agency has the resources it needs to protect Americans from serious threats like VBD. On behalf of our coalition of stakeholders invested in the mission to reduce the ongoing and emerging threats posed by ticks, mosquitoes, and other arthropod vectors, we thank you for your commitment to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Alpha-gal Alliance Action Fund
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges
American Mosquito Control Association
American Society for Microbiology
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene
Anastasia Mosquito Control District
Associated Executives of Mosquito Control in NJ
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of State and Territorial Health Officers
Center for Lyme Action
Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists

Entomological Society of America
Florida Mosquito Control Association
Georgia Mosquito Control Association
IVCC (The Innovative Vector Control Consortium)
Louisiana One Health in Action
Metropolitan Mosquito Control District
Midwest Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Disease
National Pest Management Association
North Carolina Mosquito and Vector Control Association
New Jersey Mosquito Control Association
New Jersey State Mosquito Control Commission
New England Center of Excellence in Vector-borne Disease
Northeast Regional Center for Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases
Northeastern Mosquito Control Association
Pacific Southwest Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases
Patient Centered Care Advocacy Group
Rentokil Terminix
Rockies and High Plains Vector-Borne Diseases Training and Evaluation Center
Southeastern Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases
VACUNAX INC
VectorED Network Vector-borne Disease Training and Evaluation Center