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March 26, 2008

To: National Biodefense Science Board

From: NBSB Disaster Medicine Working Group Co-Chairs
James J. James, Brigadier General (Retired), M.D., Dr.PH., M.H.A.,
Stephen V. Cantrill, M.D.

The Disaster Medicine Working Group (DM-WG) of the National Biodefense Science Board (NBSB) was asked to review and comment on the draft charter for the Federal Education and Training Interagency Group (FETIG).

The DM-WG would like to thank the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for actively soliciting input from the NBSB and the DM-WG. The early engagement of the NBSB is a clear sign that HHS is interested in engaging stakeholders in the development of public health and medical disaster preparedness and response core curricula, training, and education.

In general, the Charter is a reasonable initial step in the process of the U.S. government's efforts in the development of public health and medical disaster preparedness and response core curricula, training, and education. We share HHS's sense of urgency related to this initiative and encourage other departments to expeditiously sign the Charter.

In our review of the draft Charter three general areas raised concerns for the DM-WG. Our recommendations are listed below.

1. The DM-WG believes the current charge of the FETIG, with its broad focus on Public Health **and** Medical Disaster Preparedness and Response is overly broad.

The DM-WG recommends the FETIG charter be focused on Disaster Medicine, and aspects of Public Health that are related to Disaster Preparedness.

2. The DM-WG recognizes that the draft FETIG charter includes a statement regarding soliciting external advice, consultation, and recommendations; however, the Working Group believes, as drafted the FETIG charter does not clearly commit engagement of non-federal stakeholders.

The DM-WG recommends the FETIG charter clearly define the role and mechanism for non-federal stakeholder engagement in the development of the core curriculum.

3. The DM-WG is concerned the FETIG charter as drafted, implies that the Joint Program in disaster medicine and public health is going to be responsible for carrying out the activities of the FETIG. The draft charter, by listing the establishment of the Joint Program over emphasizes its role in these activities.

The DM-WG recommends the FETIG Charter be revised to clarify the responsibilities of the FETIG and the role of the Joint Program.

James J. James, Brigadier General (Retired), M.D., Dr.PH., M.H.A.,
Stephen V. Cantrill, M.D.