

**THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS  
RESOLUTION ON PANDEMIC FLU PREPAREDNESS**

**Resolution Summary**

Federal, state and local preparations for pandemic influenza have made great progress in recent years through significant investments in and commitment by the public health and emergency management sectors, and cooperative efforts with manufacturers of antiviral medications and vaccines. Preparations for a pandemic influenza outbreak, where widespread flu affects an entire country, continent or the whole world, have been underway across the U.S. and around the globe. Developing systems to continue basic services, such as healthcare, food, water, power and emergency response in the face of an outbreak are part of the challenges that states are addressing. Other issues involve procedures to control the spread of the disease including contingency plans requiring people to stay home, and closing schools and employment sites.

Because the pandemic occurs in many locations simultaneously and relief from the federal government may be overly taxed and unavailable, state and local governments must establish and test the effectiveness of their pandemic flu response plans. State public health responsibilities include distributing vaccines and medications as well as advising public safety responses and essential community services. States must also coordinate the emergency management roles of federal, state and local responders, and define expanded roles and legal authorities if a widespread emergency overwhelms state and local service capacities.

The Council of State Governments suggests that continued state progress in preparing for widespread outbreaks requires that the federal government provide flexibility in program requirements, continued funding and technical support, and effective communications to states on priority actions. Additionally, federal agencies need to coordinate their efforts to facilitate regional sharing of services and support between states. State policymakers need to coordinate testing of existing state plans with those of local jurisdictions and other states, as well as health care providers, local community agencies, businesses, faith-based organizations and communications media. Plans should be tested, evaluated and modified as needed to improve processes and outcomes.

State legislators are uniquely positioned to provide leadership for these efforts and to exemplify appropriate preparedness for their constituents. Legislators are encouraged to maintain familiarity with state pandemic plans and those within their local jurisdictions. They are also encouraged to support and fund emergency preparedness programs. Legislators can also provide leadership to assist efforts to ensure that effective communication occurs between constituents, medical providers, businesses, and state and local emergency planners.

### **Additional Resource Information**

- State, Local, Business, and Individual Planning Resources – <http://flu.gov>
- *Trust for America's Health, H1N1 Challenges Ahead* – <http://healthyamericans.org/reports/h1n1>
- Preparing for a Pandemic Flu Influenza, A Primer for Governors and Senior State Officials – <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0607PANDEMICPRIMER.PDF>
- CSG Healthy States Web site – <http://www.healthystates.csg.org>

### **CSG Management Directives**

**Management Directive #1:** Copies of this resolution will be sent to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Director of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), appropriate legislative leaders throughout the country and the nation's governors.

**Management Directive #2:** CSG staff will post approved resolution on CSG's Web site and make available through its regular communication venues at the state and local level to ensure its distribution to the state government and policy community.

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**WHEREAS**, influenza pandemics occurred three times in the previous century, and history suggests that the United States will face at least one pandemic in this century;

**WHEREAS**, pandemics can cause severe illness, death, economic and social disruption throughout the country and the world, with outbreaks occurring in many different locations at once;

**WHEREAS**, preparing for an influenza pandemic requires coordinated actions at all levels of government – federal, state, and local – and all sectors of society, including business, schools, faith-based and community organizations, families and individuals;

**WHEREAS**, the federal government is leading the nation’s efforts to prepare by monitoring outbreaks, providing funding and technical assistance to foster state and local preparedness, stockpiling and distributing vaccines and treatments, developing new treatments and coordinating the national response;

**WHEREAS**, states and local communities are responsible under their own authorities for responding to an outbreak within their jurisdiction and having comprehensive pandemic preparedness plans in place to protect their own citizens; and these plans must be continuously exercised and updated to achieve a stronger level of preparedness;

**WHEREAS**, pandemic preparedness strengthens state and local governments’ ability to respond to any type of public health emergency which has lasting benefits for the health of our nation;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that The Council of State Governments encourages the federal government to allow flexibility in program requirements during response to a pandemic flu outbreak, to continue funding and technical support for state and local responses, and to provide effective communications to states on priority response actions. Additionally, federal agencies need to coordinate their efforts to facilitate regional sharing of services and support between states.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that The Council of State Governments urges states to implement, test and review pandemic preparedness plans for both the state and local jurisdictions to protect the health of citizens as well as the social and economic infrastructure, and to improve the ability to respond to any type of public health emergency. State legislators are encouraged to be leaders in this process, to become familiar with state and local preparedness plans, and to participate in testing of state and local plans including communications with emergency planners and constituents.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ Day of November, 2009 at the CSG Annual Conference in La Quinta, California

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Governor Joe Manchin III  
2009 CSG President

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Senator Bart Davis  
2009 CSG Chair