March 19, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray Chair Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

S e n S House Committee on Appropriations H-307 The Capitol Washington, DC 20510 The Honorable Roy Blunt Ranking Member Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Senate Committee on Appropriations 156 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole Ranking Member & bucommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies House Committee on Appropriations 1016 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Ranking Member Blunt, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole,

On behalf of the Vector-Borne Diseaick Act

Act for that work.

The past year has demonstrated the importance of public health preparedness, and no agency is more central to that than the CDC. More people have been spending time outside last year and this year to safely distance from friends and family in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure. However, this may increase the risk of exposure to other diseases spread by insects and arthropods like ticks and mosquitoes if individuals do not take appropriate steps to protect themselves from those threats. And while some cases of COVID-19 may lead to long term negative health consequences for those who are exposed, so too will exposure to VBDs that are not appropriately diagnosed and treated. We are grateful for strong Congressional support for VBD programs in recent years and believe that ongoing investments in this area are crucial for combatting the escalating burden of VBD, perhaps now more than ever before.

The Vector-Borne Disease Network is a stakeholder group of non-

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University of Rhode Island TickEncounter Resource Center Western Gulf Center of Excellence in Vector-Borne Diseases