



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333

October 3, 2003

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Mr. Patrick J. McConnon, M.P.H.
Executive Director
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE)
2872 Woodcock Boulevard, Suite 303
Atlanta, Georgia 30341-4015

Dear Mr. McConnon:

Thank you for your letter forwarding the positions statements, adopted by CSTE in 2003.

Enclosed are the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) responses to the CSTE Position Statements sent to the National Center for Infectious Diseases. These responses have also been sent to you via electronic mail.

We look forward to continued collaboration with CSTE regarding public health issues of mutual concern.

Sincerely,

James M. Hughes, M.D.
Director
National Center for Infectious Diseases

Enclosures

National Center for Infectious Diseases Comments

CSTE POSITION STATEMENT: #03-ID-02

TITLE: State Food Safety Minimum Performance/Capacity Standards for Epidemiology and Surveillance

Statement of desired action(s) to be taken:

CSTE Recommends:

- (1) Approve performance/capacity standards for food safety programs.
- (2) Allotment of additional resources to state food safety programs to assist in attainment of the standards.
- (3) Promote initiatives addressing these standards.

CDC Comments:

CDC supports the position statement #03-ID-02, entitled, "State Food Safety Minimum Performance /Capacity Standards for Epidemiology and Surveillance." This position statement proposes a set of standards that relate to four critical functions: epidemiologic surveillance capacity to identify sporadic and outbreak-related illnesses, capacity to investigate and respond to outbreaks, public health infrastructure necessary to support food safety, and legal authority. CDC is in agreement with the proposed standards and believes that these standards will help guide activities that strengthen state capacity in these critical food safety program areas. CDC is working with state and local health departments and national associations to develop best practices for foodborne disease outbreak reporting and to develop a foodborne disease training course for local health officials. CDC recognizes that the allotment of additional resources would benefit state foodborne disease programs. As additional resources become available, consideration can be given for these important activities.