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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

AUG 30 2004

Mr. Patrick J. McConnon, MPH
Executive Director
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
2872 Woodcock Boulevard
Suite 303
Atlanta, Georgia 30341-4015

Dear Mr. McConnon:

Secretary Veneman has asked me to respond to your June 24, 2004, letter to her about the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) position regarding a National Epidemiologist Awareness Day. The Secretary appreciates having this information.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in the Department of Agriculture (USDA) that is responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. FSIS enforces the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act, which require Federal inspection and regulation of meat, poultry, and processed egg products prepared for distribution in commerce for use as human food.

As a public health agency, we rely on the work that is performed by State, local, and territorial epidemiologists in order to gain information necessary to support our regulatory actions to protect the public health. We appreciate the professional working relationships we have developed with members of your organization. These relationships are critical for us to successfully pursue our mission. Accordingly, we fully support the establishment of a National Epidemiologists Awareness Day that would potentially result in increasing the numbers of students to be trained in this field and the numbers of epidemiologists entering the workforce.

We appreciate being made aware of this important initiative. Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elsa A. Murano
Under Secretary
Food Safety



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

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February 9, 2005

Patrick J. McConnon, M.P.H.
Executive Director
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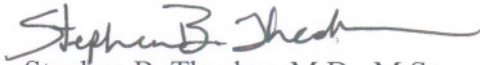
Dear Mr. McConnon:

Thank you for your letters forwarding the position statements adopted by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) during your 2003 and 2004 annual meeting.

Enclosed are the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's responses to the position statements for which you requested our comments. These position statements were circulated and comments were solicited from the appropriate parties.

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

Sincerely,


Stephen B. Thacker, M.D., M.Sc.
Director
Epidemiology Program Office

Enclosures

cc:

OD

EPO

ES

Dr. John Horan

Dr. Matthew McKenna

Dr. John Ward

Mr. Dennis Jarvis

(others who drafted comments)

Prepared by and contact: John Horan, DAPHT/EPO, (404) 498-6169

Epidemiology Program Office Comments

CSTE Position Statement 04-EC-03, National Epidemiologist Awareness Day

CDC welcomes the proposal to establish a National Epidemiologist Awareness Day. A key focus in our Futures Initiative has been on improving the promotion, or “marketing,” of the vitally important work done by epidemiologists and other public health professionals. Our newly formed Office of Workforce and Career Development has a strong interest in increasing the pipeline for those entering public health epidemiology, and OWCD staff would be glad to work with CSTE and other organizations on promotion of a National Epidemiologist Awareness Day.