



Eduardo J. Sanchez, M.D.,
M.P.H.
Commissioner of Health

1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756-
3199

<http://www.tdh.state.tx.us>
1-888-963-7111

Ben Delgado
Chief Operating Officer

Nick Curry, M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Deputy
Commissioner

May 22, 2003

Patrick McConnon
Executive Director
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
2872 Woodcock Blvd
Suite 303
Atlanta, GA 30341-4015

RE: Position Statement 02-ID09

Dear Mr. McConnon:

I am pleased to provide this follow-up to the 2002 CSTE position statement 02-ID-09 entitled "U.S. Mexico Surveillance and Epidemiology Agreement."

Since the approval of this position statement, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) convened a meeting of centers, institutes and offices within CDC to discuss ongoing projects with Mexico. The CDC Office of Global Health committed to working towards solutions to logistic and liability issues that serve as barriers to working across this important international boundary. Health commissioners from the US side have met with CDC to discuss strategies to address the many issues, including surveillance, across the border.

Other activities that have benefited from the position statement include the Border Infectious Diseases Surveillance (BIDS) program and bilateral vaccination efforts. While these projects continue to make progress, there remains little movement regarding formalized and agreed upon mechanisms to share epidemiologic data, resources and technology. Moving resources across the border remains a significant impediment to preparing the entire border region for infectious diseases threats and emergencies. This remains a large bureaucratic concern that still deserves attention.

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CSTE and the member border states should support continuing binational work to solve these concerns in order to improve epidemiology and surveillance along the border.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis M. Perrotta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "D" and "P".

Dennis M. Perrotta, PhD CIC
State Epidemiologist
Texas Department of Health