

Planning Resolution between Secretary of Health and Human Services Mike Leavitt and Governor Mike Easley of North Carolina

Whereas:

1. Influenza pandemics have occurred three times in the last century, and history and science suggest that the country and the world could face one or more pandemics in this century;
2. A pandemic can cause severe illness, death and disruption throughout the country and the world, and outbreaks can occur in many different locations all at the same time;
3. Preparing for an influenza pandemic requires coordinated action at all levels of government – federal, state, local, tribal – and all sectors of society, including businesses, schools, faith-based and community organizations, families and individuals;
4. The federal government has committed to taking a leadership role in creating a prepared Nation by monitoring international and domestic outbreaks, providing funding and technical assistance to foster local and state preparedness, stockpiling and distributing countermeasures, developing new treatments, and coordinating the national response;
5. The Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has committed to holding pandemic planning summits in all 50 states, assisting states to improve their level of preparedness;
6. President George W. Bush asked Congress for emergency spending authority to prepare the United States against the possibility of a pandemic. The Congress has provided over \$3 billion for that purpose in the Defense Appropriations Act for 2006, including funding for state and local planning purposes;
7. States and local communities are responsible under their own authorities for responding to an outbreak within their jurisdictions and having comprehensive pandemic preparedness plans and measures in place to protect their citizens;
8. Consistent with its authorities and availability of funding, HHS may provide additional resources for State and local influenza planning and preparedness activities, and require specific preparedness goals from States and localities as a condition of financial assistance;
9. Preparedness plans must be continuously exercised and updated to make sure they work and to achieve a stronger level of preparedness; and
10. Pandemic preparedness will help communities deal with any type of medical emergency and will have lasting benefits for the health of our Nation;

11. HHS and North Carolina share common goals, and have shared and independent responsibilities for influenza planning and preparedness.

Be it resolved:

1. HHS will be responsible for:

a. Continuing to provide substantial guidance and technical assistance to North Carolina as it prepares to respond to a possible influenza pandemic. Among other things, HHS coordinates pandemic response activities with state, local and tribal public health agencies; support state pandemic planning efforts; communicates and disseminates timely influenza pandemic information and technical guidance to state and local public health departments; and provides direct support and technical guidance for epidemiological investigations and diagnostic services.

b. Consistent with its statutory authorities, direction from Congress, and Departmental regulations and policy, and subject to available funding, providing States an initial amount of financial assistance for the purposes of pandemic planning. Terms and conditions of such assistance will state that additional amounts will depend upon achievement of specific preparedness goals as agreed to by HHS and North Carolina, including a self-assessment of readiness on the part of North Carolina.

c. Within six months, reviewing North Carolina's plans for use, storage and distribution of antivirals and notify North Carolina of its portion of the federal stockpile of pandemic influenza antiviral drugs.

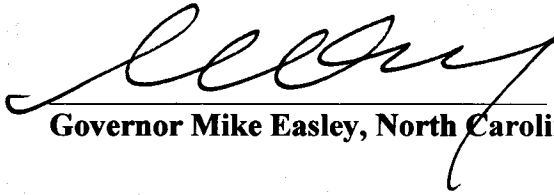
2. North Carolina will be responsible for:

a. Assuring that the operational plan for pandemic influenza response is an integral element of the overall state and local emergency response plan that will coordinate effectively with Emergency Support Function 8, Health and Medical Services, of the National Response Plan and the National Incident Management System.


b. Establishing a Pandemic Preparedness Coordinating Committee that represents all relevant stakeholders in the jurisdiction (including governmental, public health, healthcare, emergency response, agriculture, education, business, communication, community based, and faith-based sectors, as well as private citizens) and that is accountable for articulating strategic priorities and overseeing the development and execution of the jurisdiction's operational pandemic plan.

c. Within six months of the date of the signature of this resolution, notifying HHS of the amount of additional pandemic influenza antiviral drugs that North Carolina will plan to purchase in coordination with HHS, subject to the availability of funding.

d. Exercising the state's preparedness plan within six months of the date of the state planning summit between the HHS Secretary and the Governor of North Carolina, and participating in a nationwide pandemic planning exercise within twelve months of that date.



Governor Mike Easley, North Carolina



Secretary Mike Leavitt