



PASSING THE STRENGTHENING MOSQUITO ABATEMENT SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT (SMASH ACT)

ISSUE: Enacting the SMASH Act would substantially further our nation's values of protecting public health into the future. Subsequent appropriation of funding is also required by Congress to allocate federal resources for programs and operations authorized under the SMASH Act.

Background: The emergence and spread of the Zika Virus in Central and South America and the Caribbean has reawakened in the United States an appreciation of mosquitoes as not just nuisances but transmitters of serious disease. Public health agencies must be fully prepared to meet the challenges of lethal mosquito-borne illness, and as such, the SMASH Act provides the necessary framework to confront this public health threat.

Resources for prevention and control programs must be made available – and employed – so that future imported cases of exotic diseases can be contained and eliminated before their establishment and spread. The national capacity to control mosquito-borne disease largely depends on the extent to which our public health infrastructure is appropriately funded. Authorizing the SMASH Act and then subsequently appropriating the necessary funds to carry it out is essential for assuring that the necessary infrastructure is established and operational.

In the current Congress, the SMASH Act, H.R. 345, was introduced by Rep. Darren Soto (D-FL). It was included in the Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act (PAHPA), which passed the House of Representatives on January 10, 2019 by a vote of 401-17.

Companion legislation is anticipated to be introduced in 2019 by Senator Angus King (I-ME). In the previous Congress, Senator King introduced S.849, the SMASH Act, which was approved by the U.S. Senate on September 6, 2017. While the SMASH Act was initially included within the PAHPA House/Senate Conference Report in late 2018, the PAHPA Conference Report, including the SMASH Act, was never given final consideration in Congress, due to issues unrelated to the bill's substance. We remain optimistic that Senator King will reintroduce the SMASH Act in this Congress and it can be adopted by the Senate and subsequently enacted into law.

SMASH Legislative Provisions:

- * Amends the Public Health Service Act to authorize Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to issue grants for mosquito control programs through FY 2024, in such sums as necessary. Resources may be used to address emerging mosquito-borne diseases and to improve existing control programs.
- * Provides grants with a preference given to: (1) a public health emergency due to a mosquito-borne disease, or (2) a control program that is consistent with existing state preparedness plans. Note: a Matching Fund is required under the legislation, but may be waived if the area covered by a grant applicant has an extreme need.
- * Designates CDC grants to help public health agencies improve surveillance and response activities is extended through FY 2024. The Government Accountability Office must report on the surveillance and control of mosquito-borne infectious diseases in the United States and territories.

NEEDED ACTION: The SMASH Act, or comparable legislation, should be approved by the Senate and enacted into law, as well as subsequent appropriations allocated by Congress, to ensure adequate and effective resources are available for vital mosquito control efforts and to safeguard public health.
