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Biodefense Panel Applauds Committee Vote on First Responders Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 10) – Senator Joe Lieberman, Co-Chairman of the bipartisan Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense, released a statement today supporting congressional moves to help protect emergency service providers:

"The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense is pleased to see Congress addressing the need for access to vaccines that would help protect our first responders against biological threats. The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee has advanced S. 1915, the First Responder Anthrax Preparedness Act – legislation to establish a voluntary anthrax vaccination program for first responders. The House has already unanimously passed a related bill, H.R. 1300. We are encouraged to see Congress acting in alignment with recommendations we have made to make expiring vaccine available to first responders who want them, to address biological risk, and to increase the sharing of information regarding the biological threat with our state, local, territorial, and tribal emergency services communities. The Nation must continue to demonstrate its commitment to protect these emergency service providers before they need to respond to the next biological event."

The full text of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel's report is available [here](#).

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About the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense

The [Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense](#) released its report, *A National Blueprint for Biodefense: Leadership and Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts*, in October 2015. The report identifies capability gaps and recommends changes to U.S. policy and law to strengthen national biodefense while optimizing resource investments. The panel is co-chaired by former Sen. Joe Lieberman and former Gov. Tom Ridge, who are joined by former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, former Sen. Tom Daschle, former Rep. Jim Greenwood, and the Hon. Kenneth Wainstein. [Hudson Institute](#) is the institutional sponsor of the Panel, along with the [Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies](#).