

NEWS RELEASE

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Government Biosurveillance Plan Proposes Warehousing Americans' Health Information

*Citizens' Council for Health Freedom Urges Americans to Submit Public
Comment Opposing Healthcare Biosurveillance*

ST. PAUL, Minn.—We've all heard talk of NSA surveillance, but there's another surveillance that aims to track American's health records. **Citizens' Council for Health Freedom (CCHF, www.cchfreedom.org)** is alerting Americans about the Obama Administration's frightening biosurveillance (BSV) initiative, which would gather and analyze detailed health information that should be private and protected.

The Administration's "National Strategy for Biosurveillance" report specifically states, "A well-integrated, national biosurveillance enterprise is a national security imperative." The report defines biosurveillance as "the process of gathering, integrating, interpreting, and communicating essential information related to all-hazards threats or disease activity affecting human, animal, or plant health to achieve early detection and warning, contribute to overall situational awareness of the health aspects of an incident, and to enable better decision making at all levels."

But **CCHF**, a Minnesota-based national organization dedicated to preserving patient-centered health care and protecting patient and privacy rights, says this definition raises the guise of national security to hide the program's real purpose: capturing the private medical data of every American for inclusion in a massive government database.

"Biosurveillance is clearly a major reason the Obama Administration mandated in the 2009 Recovery Act, or 'economic stimulus,' that doctors and hospitals use computerized patient medical records or face financial penalties," said CCHF president and co-founder Twila Brase. "The National Biosurveillance Science and Technology Roadmap, written last June, actually talks about the need for the 'examination of data from electronic medical records' and calls for 'cooperation among federal and non-federal stakeholders, including the scientific community and public and private healthcare providers ... to achieve an efficient and reliable surveillance system.'

“The scary truth is that this government surveillance program brings together several federal agencies—all who will be able to view, share, interpret and research the data collected through the system. Cut through the jargon, and simply put, the government’s plan means that your medical records would be shared with government officials.”

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response is taking public comments on the draft of the “National Health Security Strategy 2015-2018,” which incorporates the “National Strategy for Biosurveillance.” **The deadline to comment is 5 p.m. ET, May 21, and CCHF urges all Americans to voice their concerns by visiting the [Office of Preparedness page](#) and sending a message such as the one below, provided by CCHF.**

“I oppose the One Health/One World Initiative being incorporated into this draft in Priority 3.1 and I oppose the proposed biosurveillance and global sharing of my private medical data with federal, state, and international public health officials and others without my written informed consent.”

Why oppose the biosurveillance initiative? Biosurveillance does not protect Americans’ privacy. In fact, here’s what the “roadmap” says about privacy:

“Health data in electronic form have significant value for BSV since they provide an opportunity for more timely recognition of clinical signs in clusters of humans, animals, and plants that may provide an early indication of an emerging health incident. Effectively, appropriately, and securely sharing health event data, including parts of electronic patient records and laboratory data, has significant potential to improve national awareness of incidents that could progress to impact national security.

“However, a number of data-sourcing challenges exist. For example, data on human health can be collected from numerous types of patient management systems, laboratory information systems, and insurance systems, but there is a need for comprehensive terminology standardization across the spectrum of sources to ease data fusion and analysis while protecting the privacy of personal health data.”

“This is not privacy,” Brase said. “Officials want a ‘near-real-time’ reporting requirement for electronic data systems. What is a ‘health threat’ or ‘incident’ that could jeopardize our ‘national health security?’ The Strategy says these could include terrorist activities, antibiotic resistance, climate change or subjects surrounding the economic environment. In other words, anything and everything could become a health threat by the government’s standards.”

Furthermore, Brase added, vast data sharing is planned. Priority areas include collecting “many types of health-related and non-health-related data” for which federal partners will fund or carry out research priorities. Non-federal partners may have this research option as well.

Celebrating its 20th year, Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom is a patient-centered national health freedom organization based in St. Paul, Minn. CCHF supports patient and doctor freedom, medical

innovation and the right of citizens to a confidential patient-doctor relationship. CCHF also sponsors the daily, 60-second radio feature, Health Freedom Minute, which airs on more than 150 stations nationwide on the American Family Radio Network and 90-plus stations on the Bott Radio Network. Listeners can learn more about the agenda behind proposed health care initiatives and steps they can take to protect their health care choices, rights and privacy.

CCHF president and co-founder Twila Brase, R.N., has been called one of the “100 Most Powerful People in Health Care” and one of “Minnesota’s 100 Most Influential Health Care Leaders.” Brase, a public health nurse, has been interviewed by CNN, Fox News, Minnesota Public Radio, NBC Nightly News, NBC’s Today Show, NPR, New York Public Radio, the Associated Press, Modern Healthcare, TIME, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The Washington Times, among others. She is at the forefront of informing the public of crucial health issues, such as intrusive wellness and prevention initiatives in Obamacare, patient privacy, informed consent, the dangers of “evidence-based medicine” and the implications of state and federal health care reform.

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For more information or to interview Twila Brase, president and co-founder of *Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom*, contact Deborah Hamilton, Hamilton Strategies, 215.815.7716, 610.584.1096, DHamilton@HamiltonStrategies.com.