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## Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO)



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### President's Proposed Budget Jeopardizes Food Protection Programs

**York, PA (AFDO) June 1, 2017** – The Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) warned Thursday that proposed funding cuts could dampen responses to foodborne illnesses, jeopardizing consumers while invalidating the vast efforts regulatory agencies have already expended to reduce the cost of protecting the nation's food supply.

AFDO, which represents state and local government food safety regulatory officials throughout the United States, is deeply concerned about the recommended cuts to food safety in the President's 2018 proposed budget.

AFDO Executive Director Joseph Corby said the proposed cuts imperil efforts to implement an integrated food safety system that would reduce the cost of protecting our food supply by sharing government resources at all levels and eliminating duplication.

"We are nearing the beginning of a vastly improved and more efficient food safety system that integrates surveillance, inspection, and response activities of all government partners," he said. "The proposed reduction to investments in food protection efforts could very well stymie efforts to integrate our nation's food safety system. We cannot in good conscience let this happen."

Of particular concern to AFDO are the following proposed cuts:

- Decreased funding for FDA research programs that support work related to food safety technology, outbreak response, and the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).
- Reduced funding to programs that support state and local health organizations.
- Decreased investments in partnerships and training.
- Reduced funding levels for state cooperative agreements, which includes:
  - The Food Emergency Response Network (FERN), a network that responds to biological, chemical, or radiological food contamination emergencies.
  - The International Standards Organization (ISO) accreditation, which supports non-FDA laboratories in achieving and maintaining this accreditation.
  - The Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards (MFRPS), which helps develop and implement standards for federal and state programs to better direct regulatory activities toward reducing foodborne illness.
  - The Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (Retail Program Standards), which helps prevent foodborne illness associated with the preparation, service, and sale of foods in food service and retail establishments.

State and local food safety agencies are the first responders to most foodborne illnesses. "The very areas the administration has proposed reductions to will result in decreased effectiveness in our response to these illnesses" Corby said. "These decreases will also limit lab capacity, which will result in longer times to identify virtually every foodborne illness."

**MORE**

AFDO is committed to working with the Administration and Congress to ensure food protection programs continue to receive sufficient support to build the integrated food safety system government needs, industry wants, and consumers deserve. For more information, please visit [www.afdo.org](http://www.afdo.org)

**About**

*The Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), established in 1896, successfully fosters uniformity in the adoption and enforcement of science-based food, drug, medical devices, cosmetics, and product safety laws, rules, and regulations. AFDO and its six regional affiliates provide the mechanism and the forum where regional, national, and international issues are deliberated and resolved to uniformly provide the best public health and consumer protection in the most expeditious and cost effective manner.*