

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of Science and Technology Policy

**WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY RESPONDS TO
COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

NAMED TO TASK FORCE: Vice President Mike Pence and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar named the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier, to the President's Task Force addressing COVID-19.

- The President's Task Force is working with Interagency partners to address this outbreak rapidly and to keep Americans healthy and safe.
- The Task Force is engaging the best science available to develop solutions to the outbreak.
- Conversations are focused on organizing preparedness and response, public understanding of hazards, data management, and warnings and advisories.

ESTABLISHED STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES: OSTP Director Dr. Droegemeier, and President of the National Academy of Sciences, Dr. Marcia McNutt, established [the Standing Committee on Emerging Infectious Diseases and 21st Century Health Threats](#) as part of the Trump Administration's work on COVID-19.

- The committee will stand ready to respond on short notice to requests from the Federal government to assess and consider the science and policy implications of an emerging infectious disease or other significant public health threat. They will identify opportunities to integrate science into national preparedness and response decision making.
- It will provide a venue to enable science and policy discussions relevant to the Federal government on emerging issues, research, and activities through in-depth knowledge of the sponsor's programs, goals, and objectives.
- It will serve as a platform to catalog and preserve lessons learned from all scenarios to guide future response processes is more important than ever. The committee will respond to the federal government's needs for continuing dialog related to strategic planning and program development to address emerging infectious diseases, biosecurity, and public health and medical preparedness.
- Experts will consider, identify, and discuss strategies for addressing misinformation.

COLLABORATING WITH GLOBAL SCIENCE LEADERS: OSTP Director Dr. Droegemeier is working with global science leaders including science ministers and chief science advisors to share information on integrating science into the COVID-19 response. Dr. Droegemeier plans to continue to regularly engage with science leaders from around the world.

- Thus far, Dr. Droegemeier has collaborated with science leaders from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and the United Kingdom. He is also continuing conversations with the chief scientist of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Global decision-making and ensuring the safety of all citizens requires international collaboration. Engaging with science leaders from around the world is a strategy to

ensure that the best available science to aid in development of solutions is brought to the forefront.

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- The participants of the call addressed data and information sharing, streamlining the integration of science in public policy and decision-making within each respective country, using science and data to inform quarantine and testing protocols, and assessment of disease management.
- A key component of the call was geographic distribution and genomic differences of COVID-19 (or SARS-COV-2) that may present valuable scientific background for understanding transmission and developing scientific solutions.
- The science leaders pledged continued ongoing scientific diplomacy.

LEADING DISCUSSIONS ON DATA MODELING: OSTP Director Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier, is leading an effort with interagency and academic technical experts on infectious disease modeling currently informing public health decision-making for the COVID-19 outbreak.

- Data models allow us to map likely outcomes anticipated from COVID-19 within the context of how this virus functions. Outbreak modeling and forecasting is essential for operational decision-making and policy to mitigate uncertainty during a public health response. Prioritizing research and development of data modeling underpin preparedness during an outbreak.
- The Trump Administration has established a robust interagency network of modelers supplemented by academic efforts. It is more important now than ever to coordinate among Federal agencies, representatives, stakeholders, and academia to ensure that the most up-to-date data and models are presented to our Nation's leaders.
- It is important to establish standing capability between outbreaks to facilitate early identification of emerging outbreaks, and provide scientific basis for public-health related decision-making.

WORKING HAND IN HAND WITH R&D AGENCIES: OSTP Director Dr. Droegemeier has brought R&D agencies together on special actions to address COVID-19 including surge funding to accelerate progress for existing grantees in critical topic areas (e.g., understanding the disease, vaccines, understanding spread), raising the funding ceiling on certain solicitations to bolster capabilities and accelerate progress, announcements of opportunity for high-priority topics, sharing of facilities, and other means to address the outbreak.

For more information about the Coronavirus, please visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.