

January 30, 2018

Ralph Robinson
CDC/OD/OCOO/OFR/OGS
1600 Clifton Road NE, MS E-01
Atlanta, GA 30329-11602

RE: Letter of Intent to apply to Funding Opportunity Number CDC-RFA-OT18-1804

Dear Mr. Robinson:

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) submits this Letter of Intent outlining our plan to apply for funding through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) – *Technical Assistance for Response to Public Health or Healthcare Crises* (Funding Opportunity Number CDC-RFA-OT18-1804). ASTHO understands that technical assistance and support to state health departments is vital from beginning to end, throughout each stage of an emergency response.

ASTHO is well-positioned to support this project as the only national, nonprofit organization representing the nation's state and territorial public health officials and the agencies they serve. ASTHO's members, the chief health officials of all 50 states in the United States, the District of Columbia, the five U.S. territories, and the three freely associated states, are dedicated to formulating and influencing sound public health policy, assuring excellence in state-based public health practice, and advancing health equity and optimal health for all. ASTHO is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, and in 2017, opened a second office location in Atlanta, Georgia. ASTHO was incorporated on March 23, 1942, with the goal of helping health officials navigate a rapidly changing public health landscape and to this day remains a strong voice in governmental public health.

ASTHO's mission is to support, equip, and advocate for state and territorial health officials in their work of advancing the public's health and well-being. To fulfill its mission, ASTHO's 17-member Board of Directors recently launched a 2018-2021 Strategic Plan that outlines three new strategic priorities for the organization: (1) develop strong and effective state and territorial health officials; (2) improve public health through capacity building, technical assistance, and thought leadership; and (3) advocate for resources and policies that improve the public's health and well-being. ASTHO's strategy involves being on the pulse with the emerging needs and priorities for state and territorial public health, providing leadership and networking opportunities for state and territorial health officials

and their agency staff, and integrating evidence-based and data-driven best practices to improve public health and address the upstream determinants of health. ASTHO is committed to organizational performance and operational excellence through strong fiduciary and ethical decision-making, a healthy workplace culture, advanced technology, effective governance, and diverse, high-performing teams. ASTHO is guided by six core values: leadership, integrity, collaboration, respect, diversity and inclusion, and responsiveness.

ASTHO's mission is supported by 120 highly skilled and multi-disciplinary staff with a diversity of expertise, experience, and backgrounds. Over two-thirds of ASTHO's staff have graduate or professional degrees in public health and related disciplines. Approximately 30 percent of ASTHO's staff identify as black or African American, 7 percent Asian, and 2 percent Hispanic. ASTHO's Executive Management Team has over 200 combined years of experience working in governmental public health at the local, state, and federal levels. Additionally, ASTHO partners with and convenes a network of 21 affiliated organizations representing an array of state public health agency leaders, and engages the expertise of public health leaders, practitioners, academicians, and other key stakeholders at the local, state, federal, and national levels to provide the highest quality support and services for state and territorial public health. The ASTHO Alumni Society, with over 200 members, supports former state and territorial health officials who continue to play an important role in helping shape the future of ASTHO. ASTHO coordinates seven policy committees and three standing committees to provide strategic direction for ASTHO's programs and advise on key public health issues, as well as peer networks that provide a forum for discussion and the sharing of best practices among state and territorial public health agency staff.

During a response, ASTHO provides specialized technical assistance, acts as a reliable conduit between state health departments and CDC, gathers and disseminates quick and timely situational awareness information, identifies and shares evidence-based and promising practices, and communicates to state and territorial health agency staff the position of CDC on critical issues so that informed decisions can be made throughout a rapidly changing situation. ASTHO seeks to equip state leaders with relevant information to improve public health emergency responses that are beneficial to practitioners and the public. ASTHO's capacity to respond quickly to public health crises depends greatly on the ability to pull from expertise across teams including Health Security, Finance, Grants and Contracts, Evaluation, Human Resources, and Public Relations. This can be seen in ASTHO's recent Zika Surge Staffing project, where ASTHO swiftly hired six full time staff members to serve in the US Virgin Islands to support their battle against Zika.

ASTHO takes great care and pride in providing individualized assistance to affected states as the need arises. In the 10 years since the 2009-10 H1N1 pandemic, ASTHO has been a leader in providing assistance to state health departments during public health crises. Most recently, ASTHO has helped public health leaders respond to the 2017 hurricane season, the 2016-17 Zika epidemic, the 2014-16 domestic Ebola outbreak, the 2014 unaccompanied minor immigration crisis, mass shootings influenza waves, and radiation emergencies. By using dedicated staff, an experienced board, strong policy committees (Environmental Health, Preparedness, and Infectious Disease), and energized coalitions such as the National Alliance for Radiation Readiness and the Directors of Public Health Preparedness Directors peer group, ASTHO is prepared to support states through every phase of a response.

The primary point of contact for ASTHO's application is Dawn Richardson, Senior Director of Grants and Contracts, and she can be reached at 571-527-3148 or drichardson@astho.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Fraser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael Fraser, PhD MSMSL CAE FCPP
Executive Director
Association of State & Territorial Health Officials