

PRESENTATION TO THE GILMORE PANEL

BY

DONALD WEBER

I am honored to have this opportunity to appear before you today as you conclude your work as a panel. Your work has been both timely and, unfortunately, necessary. Yet even as the Advisory Panel's work comes to a close, the nation's is only beginning. I come before you today to address this beginning, and one possible path to follow for a more secure future.

In the Panel's most recent report to Congress, you addressed the role of the private sector. The private sector represents a critical and – to date – underutilized national resource for domestic response capabilities.

During my tours as a Marine in Viet Nam, I learned the value of a common mission and unity of effort. These same precepts have been applied as we, as a private company, provide assistance to Federal, State and local authorities in order to save American lives. Our corporate roots lie in an innovative alliance between DoD, VA, and HHS to provide Force health protection services to Reserve Components – the Federal Strategic Health Alliance or the FEDS_HEAL program as it is most commonly referred to. Beginning with anthrax, expanding to smallpox and other immunizations and then to medical and dental readiness services, this award winning public/private initiative has markedly improved the readiness of participating agencies.

Teaming with leading Universities, we have been able to provide research and response capabilities to the CDC and DoD as well as to other federal entities. From training the military in the medical aspects of urban search and rescue to providing on-site support in Hamilton Township and Brentwood, we have been

able to provide critical linkages and expanded response capabilities to the formidable, but sometimes disjointed multi-level governmental response. In other words, we have been able to fill in critical gaps when requested to do so by DoD, CDC, and others.

In this ongoing experiment in freedom we call America –diversity

– in all the levels of government with varying processes and procedures

– including my native Wisconsin’s home rule statutes -

diversity is both our greatest strength and our greatest challenge. The private sector can provide the critical augmentation and expansion capabilities to link government, academic, healthcare and myriad of other assets into a cohesive and consistent response mechanism.

You need to look no further than my own company’s teaching, training, storage, transshipment, and administration of anthrax and smallpox vaccines to demonstrate the efficacy of such partnerships. We encourage other companies to follow suit. It is possible that the private sector will bridge the gaps that still exist between the Federal, state and local governments.

It was once said “it is not a matter of if, but when.” It is still not “if” nor even “when,” but rather “when again.” We believe that we in the private sector will be able to provide essential assistance that financially stressed states will require to effectively obtain, manage and execute domestic preparedness resources and programs.

You, the Panel, are uniquely positioned to make powerful recommendations to support the furtherance of private/public initiatives such as those I have briefly touched upon today. I urge you to do so.

Lastly, as a business owner and a citizen, I would like to thank you for your individual and collective contributions toward raising awareness and increasing preparedness. This trip to Washington afforded me the opportunity to revisit the just reopened Brentwood facility, now named the Curseen-Morris Center. When I was last there, Joseph Curseen Jr. and Thomas Morris Jr. had just become the nation's first casualties of bioterrorism. Our role back then was to protect others at this and other facilities for the usually nameless Americans that keep this nation running. This mission has not changed. What has changed is the scope of our commitment. It has expanded -- grown from a duty into a passion. We look forward to continuing the work *encouraged by the panel*, to work in concert with government agencies at all levels, and to protect and preserve American lives and this great nation.

I will furnish a complete statement for the record. Thank you.

Donald Weber
Chairman
Logistics Health Incorporated