



OHIO

MOSQUITO

CONTROL

ASSOCIATION

April 24, 2013

Theodore E. Wymyslo, M.D., Director
Ohio Department of Health
35 E. Chestnut Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Dr. Wymyslo,

The Ohio Mosquito Control Association was founded in 1966 with the mission of maintaining interest in and promoting vector control in Ohio. Since its inception, our organization has worked in close association with the Zoonotic Disease Program (ZDP) at the Ohio Department of Health. Through the years, the ZDP staff has provided invaluable leadership, expertise, and service to our membership and subsequently the citizens of Ohio.

My purpose in writing is to request that you reconsider the decision to cut the services offered by the Ohio Department of Health Zoonotic Disease Program: which will effectively eliminate the program and the services it provides to local mosquito control districts, public health agencies, and Ohio's citizens. The arbovirus testing and insect/tick identification services provided by ZDP are invaluable to our members as they continue their mission of protecting the health of Ohio's citizens.

Ohio has a long history of battling vector-borne diseases, most recently West Nile Virus. The threat of vector-borne disease that we have traditionally fought to prevent still exists today. Furthermore, new emerging vector-borne diseases, as well as re-emerging vector-borne diseases from the past, will undoubtedly threaten Ohio as we face the challenges of a shrinking global community and climate change. Zoonotic diseases are persistent in our environment and they are not going away. The elimination of surveillance of potential vectors, and the infrastructure we have been fortunate to have in place with the ZDP, will be an immeasurable set-back for the public health of Ohio. Our membership and the services we provide to Ohio will become reactive to disease transmission instead of preventative. The timely response to health threats will be greatly reduced. Overall, the ZDP is the coordinating agency that has helped our members protect the people of Ohio by assisting with surveillance, statewide coordination, and the consistent distribution of the most current factual information. Eliminating this program and the oversight, expertise, and guidance it has traditionally provided for the entire state is not in the best interests of the citizens of Ohio.

I appreciate your reconsidering the value and relevance of the Zoonotic Disease Program. Our organization of professionals has an extremely difficult task in protecting Ohioans from vector-borne threats and this program provides an invaluable service to our industry that allows us to best serve the citizens of Ohio in accomplishing our mission.

Thank you for your consideration,

Paul Bauman, President
Ohio Mosquito Control Association