



Association Of State And Territorial Health Officials
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April 14, 2009

Michael R. Taylor, J.D.
Research Professor of Health Policy
School of Public Health
The George Washington University
2021 K Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Professor Taylor:

On behalf of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), I would like to express ASTHO's endorsement of the recommendations outlined in the report, *Stronger Partnerships for Safer Food: An agenda for strengthening state and local Roles in the nation's food safety system*.

As you know, ASTHO is the national nonprofit organization representing the state and territorial public health agencies. ASTHO's members, the chief health officials of these agencies, are dedicated to formulating sound public health policy and to assuring excellence in state-based public health practice. ASTHO, its affiliates, and partners are committed to improving food safety capacity and capabilities of the state and territorial health agencies to better prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks of foodborne illness.

ASTHO believes the recommendations outlined in this report provide a solid foundation for improving food safety and ensuring public health protection. ASTHO's Environmental Health Policy Committee, State Environmental Health Directors Peer Group, and the ASTHO Food Safety Taskforce carefully reviewed and vetted these recommendations and strongly agree with your approach to better integrate food safety activities at all levels, with a special focus on state and local food safety programs.

ASTHO acknowledges the rigor and energy that you put into developing these recommendations and appreciates the opportunity to actively involve our members throughout the process. We look forward to continuing our partnership with you and welcome further opportunities to collaboratively advance strategies, tactics, and approaches resulting in a safer food supply for our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul E Jarris, MD, MBA". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul E. Jarris, MD, MBA
Executive Directors

CC: James Blumenstock, Chief Program Officer, Public Health Practice
Gino Marinucci, Senior Director, Environmental Health
Adam Reichardt, Director, Environmental Health