



## COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

### ***The “National Commission Regarding 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Act” or the “COVID-19 Commission Act” As Introduced by Representative Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)***

The World Health Organization announced that an unknown virus or “coronavirus” was first detected in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, the United States reported its first confirmed case of person-to-person transmission of the coronavirus. That same day, the World Health Organization announced that this coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Since that time the novel coronavirus has spread throughout Asia and the world and, as of April 1, 2020, the United States had the most reported COVID-19 cases--196,708—and about a thousand more fatalities than the attacks of September 11, 2001. What this nation does today at the Federal, State, local, tribal, territorial, and international levels to address and try and reduce the spread of COVID-19 has massive implications for this nation and the world.

***The National Commission Regarding 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Act (COVID-19 Commission Act)*** seeks to establish a bipartisan commission, modeled after the 9/11 Commission, to—

- Provide a full and complete accounting of the circumstances surrounding the emergence of the 2019 novel coronavirus, the Nation’s preparedness for the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic, and the actions taken by Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments at critical junctures before and after the World Health Organization designated the 2019 novel coronavirus as a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020;
- Identify and examine lessons learned regarding preparedness, response, and recovery efforts at all levels relating to the 2019 novel coronavirus;
- Review and evaluate recommendations and pandemic plans issued by the Bipartisan Commission on Biodefense and other nonpartisan entities regarding health security, pandemic preparedness, response, or recovery; and

- Not later than 18 months after the initial meeting of the Commission, publish a public report that includes recommendations for the development of a national plan to minimize negative public health, economic, and social impacts of future wide-scale public health emergencies based on the Commission's findings.

The Commission would have 25 members selected by relevant congressional committees. Each Chairman and Ranking Member of 12 Committees would appoint a member; one position would be filled by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Joint Economic Committee. The 12 Committees from where appointments would be made are the following *House Committees*: Committee on Oversight and Reform, Committee on Homeland Security, Select Committee on Intelligence, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Committee on Education and Labor; and *Senate Committees*: Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Committee on Intelligence, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and Committee on Foreign Relations.

The Commission is to be comprised of individuals with significant expertise in the following areas: (1) Public health preparedness, response, and recovery operations; (2) Administration of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery operations; (3) Transportation; (4) Education; (5) Economics; (6) Healthcare, with a focus on biotechnology and biomedical sciences; (7) Foreign policy; (8) Logistics and supply chain; (9) Intelligence; and (10) Election security and administration.