

have the statutory authority. We know that we are limited on time and can provide you a separate more detailed briefing on the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

OCCHE

- OCCHE's mission is to protect the U.S. population from the grave health threats posed by climate change.
- While many parts of HHS work to reduce the health risks of climate – including the CDC, NIH, and Medicare – HHS can accomplish more by supporting OCCHE's mission to coordinate a multidisciplinary approach rather than a comparable investment in a narrowly focused division.
- We need the elements of HHS that provide financial assistance to low-income households, support the elderly and people with disabilities, enhance emergency preparedness of the healthcare and public health sectors, support local public health authorities, and offer and regulate health insurance to work together seamlessly.
- And, it is equally important for HHS to have a central point of expertise to interface with the rest of the federal agencies.
- OCCHE has accomplished a great deal in its first ten months
 - *Internationally:* By making commitments to community and health system resilience and decarbonization in our health systems, we not only have provided global leadership in climate change and health but also signaled domestically the direction the US health system is heading in these areas.
 - *Intergovernmental:* Launched the Biden Administration's Interagency Working Group on Extreme Heat, which coordinates the national response to extreme heat. Extreme heat kills more Americans than any other weather-related disaster.
 - Publish a monthly Climate and Health Outlook using the most current long-term temperature forecasts from NOAA and other

forecasts to illustrate how extreme weather poses a health risk for all Americans.

- Launched a federal health systems learning network on decarbonization and resilience (including VA, DoD, IHS).
 - *Within HHS*: Has mobilized every HHS OpDiv to create climate health and equity strategies that they are beginning to implement.
 - Collected a great deal of constituent feedback through regional events and requests for information (NIH, AHRQ, CMS, OASH).
 - One of OCCHE's key priorities is health sector decarbonization and resilience.
 - On Earth Day, HHS launched a climate pledge to mobilize healthcare sector stakeholders across the country to match federal commitments to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
 - WA signees include Providence Health, UW Medicine, Seattle Children's, and Kaiser Permanente
- While often overlooked, the health care sector contributes 8.5% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, so the sector has a big role to play in helping us confront the climate crisis.
 - OCCHE co-chairs the National Academy of Medicine Action Collaborative on Decarbonizing the U.S. Health Sector, which is setting ambitious goals for public-private action and deepening commitments to action.
 - The Office is also committed to a suite of activities to build climate literacy within the health sector workforce. This includes ongoing collaboration with climate change and health physician fellowships at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health.
 - I had the opportunity to participate in a Climate Change and Health Round Table Discussion, in March when I was visiting Seattle at Harborview Medical Center.

- The round table discussion focused on lessons learned from the 2021 extreme heat event. The roundtable included a mix of hospital and EMS staff along with representatives from local public health, the state department of health, and community organizations serving those disproportionately affected by the event.
- You may know of Dr. Jeremy Hess, Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, Global Health and Emergency Medicine at the University of Washington.
- He serves as the director of the UW Center for Health and the Global Environment (CHanGE) and he was able to participate in the discussion as well.
- On May 31st, an Office of Environmental Justice was established under OCCHE to better protect the health of disadvantaged communities and vulnerable populations on the frontlines of pollution and other environmental health issues.
- Environmental Justice and climate go hand-in-hand, but there are a number of issues that we want to address outside of climate change (e.g., lead poisoning and lead contaminated issues; wastewater and sewage overflow in communities; chemical exposures, etc.).
- The Office of Environmental Justice's ultimate goal is to be a resource for underserved and overlooked communities. These issues have plagued our nation for far too long, and it's time we stepped up to put these communities first.
- OCCHE has done all of this with great resource constraints and requires its requested funding to advance its work, as do other Operating Divisions who could offer much more technical assistance and needed regulatory action with Congressional attention.
- The Fiscal Year 2022 budget also included \$6 million in evaluation funding to create the OCCHE and \$100 million each to NIH and CDC to invest in climate and health research and adaptation.