



UNITED STATES
OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
The United States Senate
112 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

May 23, 2016

Dear Senator Boxer:

I am responding to your letter to our Chairman Larry Probst on the subject of the Zika virus and the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We very much appreciate your support, and we appreciate having the opportunity to brief you regarding our preparation and planning.

The health and safety of our athletes, indeed our entire delegation, is our top priority. With that said, the United States Olympic Committee is a sports organization, and our job is to enable American athletes to win medals at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Because we are not an organization with expertise or experience in dealing with infectious diseases, we first and foremost rely on the tremendous expertise of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other public and private infectious disease experts, to understand and address the threats that viruses such as Zika pose for our athletes and staff.

We have been in regular contact with the CDC and other experts in infectious disease since the summer of 2015. They have provided sound recommendations based on all available information and we have communicated the CDC's recommendations via a variety of mediums to all potential Team USA athletes and support staff likely to travel to Rio before and during the Games. For example, I have enclosed a letter we sent to our athletes in February.

Additionally, in order to ensure that our athletes and staff continue to have the very best information, and to assist us in identifying and establishing best practices, in February we formed an Infectious Disease Advisory Group. The USOC IDAG is chaired by Dr. Carrie L. Byington, MD, from the University of Utah Health Care, and she is joined by Dr. Randy Taplitz, MD, from the University of California, San Diego, and Capt. Martin S. Cetron, MD, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The group is helping us to identify and establish – on a real-time basis - best practices regarding the mitigation, assessment and management of infectious disease in general, and regarding the Zika virus specifically, paying particular attention to how issues may affect athletes and staff participating in the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In addition to establishing best practices for Team USA, the advisory group assists the USOC in developing informational material for athletes and staff, with education and consistent communication being key to our efforts as it relates to the Zika virus. The members of the IDAG are also available to answer individual questions from delegation members, monitor and share updated scientific literature on relevant issues, and provide insight to support athlete-centric care should an individual become ill.

All three doctors are world-class physicians and experts in the field of infectious disease. Our in-house medical teams are some of the best in the world at what they do, but having access to, and relying upon, the kind of outside expertise represented by this advisory group is just another way we can make sure our athletes and staff have what they need compete at a high level.

In addition to having one-on-one access to the IDAG, athletes and staff have been made aware of the CDC's guidelines on mosquito-bite prevention and will have air conditioning units in their rooms, will be provided with

OFF! Insect repellent, and will be allocated long-sleeved shirts and pants as part of their casual wear uniforms. Condoms will also be distributed to athletes and staff for use with sexual partners for up to six months following their trip to South America, as recommended by the CDC.

Additionally, the relevant authorities in Rio are doing their part to evaluate the Games environment and mitigate against mosquito breeding by eliminating standing water near Olympic and Paralympic venues and are conducting fumigation where appropriate.

Finally, we have created a Medical Emergency Response Plan to provide pre-identified medical management strategies for any illness or injury in Rio. Those plans include preparations to manage serious illnesses in Rio by identifying private hospitals in addition to those made available by the Rio 2016 Organizing Committee to ensure maximum medical coverage.

As we finalize our Games preparations we continue to be in regular contact with the CDC, via our IDAG, and will post relevant updates to TeamUSA.org/RioTravelUpdates.

Again, thank you for your interest in Team USA and please don't hesitate to contact me if we can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S.A. Blackmun". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Scott A. Blackmun
Chief Executive Officer

CC: Sarah Konrad, Chair, Athletes' Advisory Council