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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1401

August 1, 2002

The Honorable Tom Ridge  
Director  
Office of Homeland Security  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Governor Ridge:

I am writing to share with you my interest in an innovative homeland security proposal called *BioSentinel* offered by Mr. Todd Bracken, Indianapolis, Indiana. Mr. Bracken has developed an early warning system that can help state and community leaders respond to a possible bio-terror attack.


Using available technology, Mr. Bracken is working with the public, private and non-profit sectors in Indiana to implement a technology product that monitors retail pharmaceutical sales and alerts local health professionals and emergency response agencies to spikes in sales of certain products. Rapid increases in the sale of certain health-care products in a short time period may indicate a concentration of flu-like and other symptoms in a particular area. Early notification of public health officials of these situations could provide the benefit of extra time for emergency response in an instance of a possible bio-related event.

I understand Mr. Bracken is working with the Hudson Institute, the Indiana Technology Partnership, and the Indiana Health Industry Forum, among others, to further develop this program. I understand also that a pharmaceutical network in Indiana is also participating in this effort. I have enclosed additional information about *BioSentinel* for your reference.

As you continue your important work to help strengthen safety, security and emergency response activities for our nation, I hope thoughtful consideration will be given to the merits of this important and innovative proposal put forward by Mr. Bracken.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Richard G. Lugar  
United States Senator

RGL/rhr  
enclosure