

# Alexander: Committee Approves 5 Nominees Ready to Help Improve and Protect Health of All Americans

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**WASHINGTON, August 2, 2017** — The Senate health committee today approved the nominations of Lance Allen Robertson to serve as Assistant Secretary for Aging, Dr. Brett Giroir to serve as Assistant Secretary for Health, Dr. Robert Kadlec to serve as Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Dr. Elinore F. McCance-Katz to serve as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, and Dr. Jerome Adams to serve as Surgeon General of the Public Health Service.

“These five nominees have a thorough understanding of the mission of the department in which I hope they will soon serve – to enhance and protect Americans’ health and well-being,” said **Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.)**. “They will be responsible for leading the nation in event of public health emergencies, addressing mental health and substance abuse, including helping respond to the opioid abuse crisis, and overseeing public health programs. I hope the Senate will quickly confirm these nominees so they can begin their vital work.”

Mr. Robertson is currently the State of Oklahoma’s Director of Aging Services, a position he has held for the past decade. As Assistant Secretary for Aging, Mr. Robertson will oversee grants to states to support important programs like Meals on Wheels and provide Medicaid recipients home care and financial management.

Dr. Giroir is Founder and CEO of Health Science and Biosecurity Partners, and is an Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics, Tropical Medicine and Medical Ethics and Health Policy at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. As Assistant Secretary for Health, Dr. Giroir will oversee public health offices and programs, including biomedical research regulation and integrity, encouraging vaccinations and helping respond to the opioid abuse crisis.

Dr. Kadlec currently serves as Deputy Staff Director for Sen. Richard Burr (R-N.C.) on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. As Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Dr. Kadlec will ensure we are prepared for the next public health threat, whether natural, such as Ebola or Zika, or a bioterror attack.

Dr. McCance-Katz is currently the Chief Medical Officer for the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act made some significant changes to the agency Dr. McCance-Katz will lead, by directing the assistant secretary to focus on evidence-based practices, ensure the agency’s grants are used effectively, and improve the recruitment of mental health and substance abuse professionals.

Dr. Jerome Adams today serves as Indiana State Health Commissioner. In the past, Surgeons General have addressed important issues such as preventing chronic diseases, supporting breast feeding, nutrition and exercise, and mental health.

When these nominees are confirmed, all of the assistant secretaries within the HELP Committee's jurisdiction at the Department of Health and Human Services will be filled.