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December 14, 2018

James Berger, MS, MT (ASCP)
Office of HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease Policy,
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 C Street SW, Room L001
Switzer Building,
Washington, DC 20201

RE: Solicitation of Nominations for Appointment to the Tick-Borne Disease Working Group Federal Register: Vol. 83, Friday, November 16, 2018, Page 57739

Dear Mr. Berger:

On behalf of the Entomological Society of America (ESA), we appreciate the opportunity to recommend Megan Fritz, Ph.D. for consideration to serve on the Tick-Borne Disease Working Group (Working Group).

As evidenced by her research interests and experience, Dr. Fritz would be an ideal candidate to help the Working Group meet its mandate to guide federal tick-borne disease research and mitigation efforts. As an assistant professor in the Department of Entomology at the University of Maryland, Dr. Fritz leads pioneering research on genomic variations in insect evolution, including disease vectors, through the use of innovative molecular, genomic, and computational practices.

While she has a broad entomological background that encompasses many different taxa, she has published numerous papers regarding different insect disease vectors including ticks and mosquitoes (*Culex pipiens*). Dr. Fritz's research incorporates a number of valuable perspectives into the tick-borne disease conversation as she has studied ticks from both a human disease and agricultural perspective. With federal and non-federal stakeholders, such as the National Academies of Science, the One Health Initiative, and the CDC highlighting the intersection of livestock and vector-borne disease, this diverse background is vital to advancing the Working Group's mission.

Dr. Fritz also brings valuable field experience to the Working Group. In addition to publishing material alerting the livestock community to the danger of the long horned tick, Dr. Fritz also works with the Maryland Tick Identification Service which supports state public health and agricultural agencies and state level identification and eradication efforts. Through these experiences, Dr. Fritz has gained an intimate familiarity with the ways in which tick-borne disease mitigation strategies are implemented in practice at the state and local levels. As a consequence, Dr. Fritz would bring to the Working Group a unique and informed perspective on where federal resources are needed most.

ESA, the largest organization in the world serving the professional and scientific needs of over 7,000 entomologists and individuals in related disciplines, believes Dr. Fritz's distinguished career would make

her an excellent addition to Tick-Borne Disease Working Group, and we encourage you to consider her nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. K. Peterson', with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert K. D. Peterson, Ph.D.
Professor, Entomology, Montana State University
2019 President, Entomological Society of America