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July 28, 2022

Re: Request for Information Related to the Climate Crisis and Health Industry

To Whom It May Concern,

The impact of the climate crisis on health is well documented – from increasing rates of asthma in vulnerable communities, to an increase in deaths from extreme weather events, heat, infectious and vector-borne diseases, and compromised food supplies.<sup>1</sup> Yet, less attention has been paid to the fact that the health care industry as a whole is responsible for an estimated 10 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States (U.S.) and more than four percent of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>2, 3</sup> In particular, a vast amount of emissions, 71 percent, are primarily derived from the health care supply chain through the production, transport, and disposal of goods and services.<sup>4</sup> If the global health sector were a country, it would be the fifth-largest emitter on the planet.<sup>5</sup> With U.S. greenhouse gas emissions rising by an estimated six percent between 2010 and 2018, it is clear that all actors in the health care system have roles to play in addressing their contributions to the climate crisis.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Balbus et al., *The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment*, GLOBALCHANGE.GOV (2016), [https://health2016.globalchange.gov/high/ClimateHealth2016\\_FullReport.pdf](https://health2016.globalchange.gov/high/ClimateHealth2016_FullReport.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Matthew J. Eckelman & Jodi Sherman, *Environmental Impacts of the U.S. Health Care System and Effects on Public Health*, 11:6 PLOS ONE (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0157014>.

<sup>3</sup> Mathew J. Eckelman et al., *Health Care Pollution and Public Health Damage in The United States: An Update*, 39:12 HEALTH AFFAIRS (2020), <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.01247>.

<sup>4</sup> Josh Karliner et al., *Health Care's Climate Footprint*, HEALTH CARE WITHOUT HARM (Sept. 2019), [https://noharm-global.org/sites/default/files/documents-files/5961/HealthCaresClimateFootprint\\_090619.pdf](https://noharm-global.org/sites/default/files/documents-files/5961/HealthCaresClimateFootprint_090619.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Mathew J. Eckelman et al., *Health Care Pollution and Public Health Damage in The United States: An Update*, 39:12 HEALTH AFFAIRS (2020), <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.01247>.

Accordingly, the Ways and Means Committee requests input on the ways your organization integrates climate-related policies into daily operations, including how your group purchasing organization leverages its purchasing power to work with supply chain vendors to address the climate crisis. Please review the PDF of questions attached, gather relevant information across your organization, and respond to the request for information electronically at [REDACTED] by **the end of the day on August 19, 2022**. Please note that the Ways and Means Committee may choose to publish the results from this request for information (RFI) on its [website](#).

Tackling the climate crisis requires a commitment from all sectors. Our nation's health care sector strives to keep people healthy, and that includes protecting Americans from the impacts of the climate crisis. Your responses will be vital in helping us develop policies and supports to promote climate action in the health care sector. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. For additional questions, including questions or assistance with responding to the RFI, please contact the Committee on Ways and Means Majority staff at [healthdem.submissions@mail.house.gov](mailto:healthdem.submissions@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard E. Neal".

Richard E. Neal  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means

## Climate Crisis Request for Information – Group Purchasing Organizations

### Part I: About Your Organization and Members

*The following questions will provide us with information about your organization and members.*

1. What is the name of your organization?
2. Please provide the best contact information for future correspondence.
  - Name
  - Email Address
  - Phone Number
3. How many members make up your group purchasing organization (GPO)?
4. Approximately how many total staffed beds does your membership represent?
5. Please select the types of organizations your members represent (*select all that apply*).
  - Health System (e.g., at least one hospital and at least one group of physicians in one organization)
  - Multi-hospital Health System (i.e., two or more hospitals owned by the same organization)
  - Independent Hospital
  - Nursing Home Corporation (i.e., multiple nursing facilities under the same corporation)
  - Independent Nursing Home
  - Multi-facility Dialysis Company
  - Ambulatory care clinics
  - Other (please specify)

## Part II: Managing Extreme Weather Events

*This section will examine how you support your members during extreme weather events.*

6. Please list the top five most catastrophic climate-related weather events that have affected your ability to assist your members in the last five years. For each event, please discuss the following:

- Type of event
- Location(s) affected
- How your ability to maintain quality of service was affected
- Assistance your organization provided
- Estimated monetary cost to your organization and members

- Event 1
- Event 2
- Event 3
- Event 4
- Event 5

7. If there are other climate-related weather events you would like to describe, please upload the information here.

8. Please upload any tools and/or guidance documents your organization has created for your members to help them respond to climate-related weather events here.

9. What are the three biggest concerns your organization has heard from your members about the future impact of climate-related disasters on their operations? If none, please put "N/A" in one of the boxes.

- Concern 1
- Concern 2
- Concern 3

### Part III: Contracting with Suppliers – Environmental Requirements

*This section will evaluate your contracting process with suppliers, focusing on the environmental impact of the supplier organizations.*

10. Please select the types of suppliers that you contract with on behalf of your members.
  - Brand-name pharmaceutical manufacturers
  - Generic pharmaceutical manufacturers
  - Distributors
  - Wholesalers
  - Medical supply manufacturers
  - Medical device manufacturers
  - Commercial reprocessing companies
  - Food vendors
  - Other (please specify)
11. Do you require your suppliers to adhere to any specific environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards or certifications as part of your contractual standards?
  - Yes
  - No
12. Please describe which standards your organization requires suppliers to adhere to as part of your contractual standards.
13. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards to ensure they are **environmentally resilient**, particularly in the face of an extreme weather event? **[If No, skip to question 15]**
  - Yes
  - No
14. Please describe the contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires suppliers to meet to ensure they are **environmentally resilient**, including alternative sourcing requirements and the number of supply chain tiers the supplier must report.
15. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks to ensure they are **environmentally resilient**, particularly in the face of an extreme weather event. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented.
16. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **carbon emissions** as a whole (and at the individual product level, as applicable), including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes (*select all that apply*)?
  - Raw material sourcing
  - Manufacturing
  - Distribution processes
  - None of the above

17. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **carbon emissions** as a whole (and at the individual product level, as applicable), including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include what framework and external assurance process is used for the information reported. [Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 16]

- Raw material sourcing:
- Manufacturing:
- Distribution processes:

18. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **carbon emissions** as a whole (and at the individual product level, as applicable), including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was **not** selected in question 16]

- Raw material sourcing:
- Manufacturing:
- Distribution processes:

19. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **utilization of renewable energy**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes (*select all that apply*)?

- Raw material sourcing
- Manufacturing
- Distribution processes
- None of the above

20. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **utilization of renewable energy**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. [Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 19]

- Raw material sourcing:
- Manufacturing:
- Distribution processes:

21. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **utilization of renewable energy**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was **not** selected in question 19]

- Raw material sourcing:
- Manufacturing:
- Distribution processes:

22. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **impact on air pollution**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes (*select all that apply*)?
- Raw material sourcing
  - Manufacturing
  - Distribution processes
  - None of the above
23. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **impact on air pollution**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. [Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 22]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
24. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **impact on air pollution**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was **not** selected in question 22]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
25. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **impact on water pollution**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes (*select all that apply*)?
- Raw material sourcing
  - Manufacturing
  - Distribution processes
  - None of the above
26. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **impact on water pollution**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. [Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 25]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:

27. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **impact on water pollution**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was **not** selected in question 25]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
28. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **impact on biodiversity**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes (*select all that apply*)?
- Raw material sourcing
  - Manufacturing
  - Distribution processes
  - None of the above
29. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **impact on biodiversity**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. [Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 28]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
30. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **impact on biodiversity**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was **not** selected in question 28]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
31. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **impact on stressing water supplies**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes (*select all that apply*)?
- Raw material sourcing
  - Manufacturing
  - Distribution processes
  - None of the above

32. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **impact on stressing water supplies**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. [Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 31]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
33. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **impact on stressing water supplies**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was *not* selected in question 31]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
34. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **waste and management of hazardous materials**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes? (*Select all that apply*)
- Raw material sourcing
  - Manufacturing
  - Distribution processes
  - None of the above
35. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **waste and management of hazardous materials**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. [Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 34]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
36. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **waste and management of hazardous materials**, including from raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was *not* selected in question 34]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:

37. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for the **waste impact of their final product and re-use potential** for the end-product user? [If No, skip to question 39]
- Yes
  - No
38. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for the **waste impact of their final product and re-use potential** for the end-product user.
39. Do you prioritize contracting with suppliers for **products derived from circular solutions** to promote re-use to reduce carbon footprint and waste? [If No, skip to question 41]
- Yes
  - No
40. Please describe how your organization prioritizes contracting with suppliers for **products derived from circular solutions** to promote re-use to reduce carbon footprint and waste.
41. Please describe why your organization does **not** prioritize contracting with suppliers for **products derived from circular solutions** to promote re-use to reduce carbon footprint and waste. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented.

*This section will explore how these environmental contracting standards and any other environmental designations inform your members when they make purchasing decisions.*

42. Are the environmental contracting standards (discussed in the previous section) the suppliers are required to report available for members to view when they are making purchasing decisions?
- Yes
  - No
43. Do you have an “environmentally preferred product” or similar designation(s) for members to see when making purchasing decisions? [If No, skip to question 48]
- Yes
  - No
44. Please describe the targets or goals that the supplier must meet to achieve this/these designation(s). Please include information on the evidence-base used to establish these targets, and external verification of information submitted by suppliers to meet these targets.
45. When was/were this/these designation(s) established?

46. Is/are this/these designation(s) publicly available? **[If Yes, skip to question 48]**
- Yes
  - No
47. If **not** publicly available, is/are this/these designation(s) available to other suppliers?
- Yes
  - No
48. Please explain the impetus for your organization tracking and requiring these standards or benchmarks related to environmental impact in your contractual terms in the above areas.
49. Did your members request that the above standards or benchmarks be a requirement in contractual terms for suppliers?
- Yes
  - No
50. Please describe member response to the tracking of the above contractual standards and designation(s). Please describe any changes to purchasing behavior, including if these responses vary by the size or type of member.

#### **Part IV: Contracting with Suppliers – Social and Governance Requirements**

*This section will evaluate components of your contracting process with suppliers, focusing on social and governance practices of the supplier organizations.*

51. Do you have contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **human rights practices and labor practices**, including child labor standards, for raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes (*select all that apply*)?
- Raw material sourcing
  - Manufacturing
  - Distribution processes
  - None of the above
52. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **human rights practices and labor practices**, including child labor standards. Please include alternative sourcing requirements and the number of supply chain tiers the supplier must report. **[Answer choices will populate based on what was selected in question 51]**
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:

53. Please describe why you do **not** require your suppliers to meet contractual standards or benchmarks for their **human rights practices and labor practices**, including child labor standards, for raw material sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution processes. Please include any future plans to include these contractual standards and how they will be implemented. [Answer choices will populate based on what was **not** selected in question 51]
- Raw material sourcing:
  - Manufacturing:
  - Distribution processes:
54. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **community outreach or community benefits**, such as partnering with local non-profits? [If No, skip to question 56]
- Yes
  - No
55. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **community outreach or community benefits**.
56. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for their **diversity and inclusion practices** for their company? [If No, skip to question 58]
- Yes
  - No
57. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for their **diversity and inclusion practices** for their company.
58. Do you require your suppliers to meet certain contractual standards for the **diversity of their board and/or executive leadership**? [If No, skip to question 60]
- Yes
  - No
59. Please describe what contractual standards or benchmarks your organization requires from suppliers for the **diversity of their board and/or executive leadership**.

*This section will explore how these social and governance contracting standards and any other social practice designations are available to your members to use when making purchasing decisions.*

60. Are the social and governance contracting standards (discussed in the previous section) that suppliers are required to report available for members to view when they are making purchasing decisions?
- Yes
  - No

61. Do you have a “socially preferred product” or similar designation(s) for members to see when making purchasing decisions? **[If No, skip to question 66]**

- Yes
- No

62. Please describe the targets or goals the supplier must meet to achieve this/these designation(s). Please include information on the evidence-base used to establish these targets and external verification of information submitted by suppliers to meet these targets.

63. When was/were this/these designation(s) established?

64. Is/are this/these designation(s) publicly available? **[If Yes, skip to question 66]**

- Yes
- No

65. If **not** publicly available, is/are this/these designation(s) available to other suppliers?

- Yes
- No

66. Please explain the impetus for your organization tracking and requiring these standards or benchmarks related to social and governance practices in your contractual terms in the above areas.

67. Did your members request that the above standards or benchmarks be a requirement in contractual terms for suppliers?

- Yes
- No

68. Please describe member response to the tracking of the above contractual standards and designation(s). Please describe any changes to purchasing behavior, including if these responses vary by the size or type of member.

## **Part V: Your Organization’s ESG Reporting**

*This section will examine your organization’s own Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reporting.*

69. Does your organization publish its own ESG or CSR report? **[If No, skip to question 90]**

- Yes
- No

70. Does your ESG or CSR report include the use of a standard sustainability framework, such as the Global Reporting Initiative Standards or Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) Standards? **[If No, skip to question 72]**

- Yes
- No

71. Which sustainability framework does your organization use to create your ESG or CSR report?
72. Does your CSR or ESG report undergo auditing and assurance by outside accountants?
- Yes
  - No
73. Does your ESG or CSR report align with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (UN SDGs)? **[If No, skip to question 75]**
- Yes
  - No
74. Please list which UN SDGs you link to your sustainability efforts in your ESG or CSR report.
75. Has your company signed the [UN Global Compact](#)?
- Yes
  - No
76. Does your ESG or CSR report discuss how your organization is **minimizing business risks related to** extreme weather events or other disruptions to the business? **[If No, skip to question 78]**
- Yes
  - No
77. Please describe the standards or benchmarks your organization's ESG or CSR report uses to **understand and quantify all business risks** related to the climate crisis.
78. Does your ESG or CSR report discuss how your organization is **reducing your carbon emissions**? **[If No, skip to question 80]**
- Yes
  - No
79. Please describe the standards or benchmarks your organization's ESG or CSR report uses to quantify your **carbon emissions**.
80. Does your ESG or CSR report discuss how your organization is using **renewable energy**? **[If No, skip to question 82]**
- Yes
  - No
81. Please describe the standards or benchmarks used in your organization's ESG or CSR report for your organization's utilization of **renewable energy**.

82. Does your ESG or CSR report discuss your organization's efforts to **promote diversity and inclusion** in your own workforce? **[If No, skip to question 84]**
- Yes
  - No
83. Please describe the standards or benchmarks used for your organization's ESG or CSR report to define your efforts to **promote diversity and inclusion**.
84. Does your ESG or CSR report discuss your organization's efforts to **engage in community outreach or provide community benefits**, such as partnering with local non-profits? **[If No, skip to question 86]**
- Yes
  - No
85. Please describe the standards or benchmarks used for your organization's ESG or CSR report to define your efforts to **engage in community outreach or provide community benefits**.
86. Do you have any governance measures that link progress on climate-related measures to executive promotion and/or compensation? **[If No, skip to question 88]**
- Yes
  - No
87. Please describe any governance measures that link progress on climate-related measures to executive promotion and/or compensation.
88. Please share anything else you feel is important about your organization's ESG or CSR report.
89. Please upload your most recent ESG or CSR report here.

## **Part VI: Conclusion**

90. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your organization's work regarding environmental and social responsibility to mitigate the impacts of the health care supply chain?
91. Please upload any other information that you would like to share with the Committee related to environmental and social responsibility.
92. Please upload an additional file, as needed.
93. Please upload an additional file, as needed.
94. Please upload an additional file, as needed.