



In the aftermath of September 11th two priorities are at the top of everyone's agenda: public health and public safety.

The bulk of the work in fighting terrorism will fall on six state agencies.

That's why I'm here today with the Commissioners of Health, Public Safety, Agriculture, Pollution Control, Military Affairs and Administration - to outline our proposal for domestic security.

We are fortunate in Minnesota to already have a strong system to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies.

But now we have additional threats to be concerned with, so we must get extra prepared. Our measured, strategic package includes new spending to strengthen our public health and safety networks and new policy initiatives to make sure state and local authorities can quickly and effectively respond to any emergency.

We need to apply our resources to expand four key functions: (as you can see on the chart):

Ventura Administration Domestic Security Package



Ensuring Public Health and Safety for Minnesota

	<u>FY '02-'05</u>
Planning	\$ 4.905 M
Identification/Detection	5.132
Training	1.445
Response	5.476
Total	\$16.958 M

- planning
- early identification and detection
- training
- and response.

PLANNING

About \$5 million over four years will do several things:

- Pay for staff to coordinate information, assess terrorist threats, and make plans to deal with them
- Create systems to keep track of essential resources - things we might need quickly if there's an emergency
- Create a link between public health agencies and local emergency units - so they can work together quickly if something big happens

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND DETECTION

I've seen the labs we have available to detect and analyze toxic chemicals and biological agents - and they are not up to snuff.

That's why our bonding request includes \$85 million for a new lab facility.

Beyond that we still need to spend about \$5 million in the next four years for staff and special equipment to develop safe and fast testing methods.

If something deadly strikes, we need to identify it quickly and correctly.

TRAINING

Our emergency units already have plenty of training and experience in dealing with natural disasters and other ordinary emergencies.

But we also have to be trained for extra-ordinary emergencies.

Local and state response units, bomb squads and hazmat teams need to know how to respond to weapons of mass destruction.

Additional public health staff is needed to coordinate training and outbreak response.

We also need to train personnel involved in food safety and agriculture security to respond to any sort of outbreak.

RESPONSE

Planning and training pay off with quick and effective action.

With \$5.5 million dollars over the next four years, we can pay for the staff, equipment and technology we need to respond to terrorism.

This includes things like enhanced Capitol security, equipment upgrades, and improved communications systems.

We need a system to allow the Department of Health to reach the public health network and other responders at any time - 24/7.

We are also recommending expanding the role of our chemical assessment teams to include both assessment and mitigation. This change will ensure a quick response anywhere in the state.

Federal, state and local governments have a shared responsibility to protect our people, our food supply and the environment.

These new state investments are added to more than \$9 million dollars in federal funds currently available for terrorism response in Minnesota.

We expect more federal money in fiscal year 2002 to improve all facets of our state and local readiness to fight terrorism.

And the President is proposing a budget in 2003 that would double the homeland security budget, including a 10-fold increase in resources for first responders.

The second major part of our package to provide domestic security in Minnesota involves policy changes that strengthen emergency authorities, identify and immobilize terrorists, and provide tougher penalties for terrorist acts.

We must remember that the war against terrorism is a war, and we need to make it easier for authorities to act quickly in times of emergency.

For example, if there's a public health emergency, we need to know the chain of command and how to ensure a coordinated response.

Because we must move quickly during emergencies, we are proposing authority to waive or suspend certain statutes, rules and regulations to expedite emergency response.

If we discover contaminated food is causing a major problem, we need the authority to embargo that item to a limited geographical area.

If we confront bio-terrorism, we need to be able to quarantine ill people, or those exposed to a biological agent, to limit the spread of the disease.

In such emergencies, we also need the authority to control health facilities and direct medical resources.

But the smartest thing to do, and the best thing to do, is to prevent terrorism - stop it before it starts.

We need more information and more sharing of information across agencies and across jurisdictions.

Sometimes, to identify possible terrorists and investigate threats, we may need to share private health information with certain people.

In certain circumstances, we should allow law enforcement to share information from criminal investigations with certain agencies.

Agencies should also be allowed to share information related to the planning of possible terrorist acts and protect security information that could be used to plan a terrorist attack.

Finally, we need to improve our criminal laws to deal with terrorists.

We need to make terrorism a specific crime - and set some harsh penalties for it.

We also need to stop their money flow by "freezing" their assets.

We need to know what terrorists are communicating - so we need to update our wire-tap laws, to conform with the federal law.

This war is not going to be easy or short. We are in it for the long run, and we have to take it seriously, but without over-reacting.

I have outlined our general approach - and there are plenty more details.

Before I let you ask questions of the various commissioners, I'd like to say I look forward to working with the Legislature on this important proposal and passing a reasonable and measured package that will protect and support public health and safety in Minnesota.