

Secretary Napolitano Applauds President Obama's Intent to Nominate Alexander Garza as Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano applauds President Obama's intent to nominate Dr. Alexander Garza—who brings extensive government and military public health experience—as Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer.

“Dr. Garza brings many years of experience as both a leader in the public health field and a practicing emergency physician to the Department's Office of Health Affairs,” said Secretary Napolitano. “I look forward to working with him to prepare for and respond to all health threats—from the H1N1 virus to biological weapons—to ensure the safety of our nation.”

As Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer, Garza will lead all DHS medical and health security matters, oversee the health aspects of contingency planning for all chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear hazards, and lead a coordinated effort to ensure that DHS is prepared to respond to biological and chemical Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

Alexander Garza

Alexander Garza is currently serving as a staff physician for the Level I trauma center at the Washington Hospital Center.

He previously worked as the Director of Military Programs at the ER One Institute at the Washington Hospital Center, Associate Medical Director of Emergency Medical Services for the State of New Mexico, and Director of Emergency Medical Services for the Kansas City Health Department. He has served in the military as a battalion surgeon, Public Health Team Chief during Operation Flintlock in Dakar, Senegal, Public Health Team Chief during Operation Iraqi Freedom I, and as a special investigator and medical expert for Major General Raymond Odierno. He previously served as a paramedic, a flight paramedic, and an Emergency Medical Technician in Missouri.

Garza holds an MD from University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine and a Masters in Public Health from St. Louis University School of Public Health.