CED Issues Statement on CDC Director’s Call for Major Reforms of the Agency

New York, August 18, 2022...The Committee for Economic Development, the public policy center of The Conference Board (CED), issued the following statement in response to the announcement by Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), that the CDC will be undertaking major reforms:

The Committee for Economic Development, the public policy center of The Conference Board (CED), welcomes the announcement from the CDC’s Director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, regarding the reorganization of the agency to prioritize public health needs, address continuing outbreaks, and restructure CDC communications to make guidance for the public clearer and easier to access. We share Dr. Walensky’s goal of “a new, public health, action-oriented culture at the CDC that emphasizes accountability, collaboration, communication and timeliness.” These and other reforms will help the agency respond much faster to public health emergencies, including the current monkeypox outbreak.

Many of the proposed reforms align with CED recommendations in its Solutions Brief, Preparing for the Next Health Crisis: Lessons from the Pandemic:

• Significantly reforming the CDC to find better ways to implement scientific guidance in real-world contexts;
• Reducing the number and complexity of guidance documents (CDC released over 7,000 guidance documents in the pandemic);
• Clearly presenting public health data to reduce public confusion and skepticism and avoid the “start-stop” nature of changes in guidance that characterized this pandemic;
• Implementing reform to enable the release of data as fast as possible to encourage timeliness in public health responses;
• Establishing new authority to require reporting of data from all states. Additionally, building a “national network of precise, uniform, accurate data” from all states with uniform reporting standards to enable the fastest possible analysis and release of data.

Looking forward, the CDC should also consult more closely with business through an advisory committee to minimize disruptions to the economy during public health emergencies and plan for the future.

Media Contact
Joseph.DiBlasi@tcb.org

About CED
The Committee for Economic Development (CED) is the public policy center of The Conference Board. The nonprofit, nonpartisan, business-led organization delivers well-researched analysis and reasoned solutions in the nation’s interest. CED Trustees are chief executive officers and key executives of leading US companies who bring their unique experience to address today’s pressing policy issues. Collectively they represent 30+ industries, over a trillion dollars in revenue, and over 4 million employees. www.ced.org

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