



Judith G. Case, Chairman
Supervisor, District 4
Board of Supervisors

May 17, 2005

VIA FAX: (916) 319-2131

The Honorable Juan Arambula
State Capitol, Room 6011
Sacramento, CA 94249-0031

Dear Assemblyman Arambula:

The Fresno County Board of Supervisors requests your support to combat a serious public health threat. California is currently in the midst of an outbreak of tuberculosis (TB). TB is an infection that spreads through the air from person to person. It can cause serious lung disease and even death.

Since July of 2004, California has welcomed the arrival of 3,400 Hmong refugees who are resettling from Thailand. While performing routine refugee health examinations, our local health departments identified 28 Hmong refugees infected with active TB. Based on this experience, we know that Hmong refugees are 100 times more likely to be infected with TB than other California residents. Furthermore, 14 percent of these individuals are infected with multi-drug resistant (MDR) TB, which is a form of TB that is resistant to numerous antibiotics and expensive to treat.

By 2007, an additional 2000 Hmong still living in Thailand will resettle in California. A recent investigation in Thailand by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has revealed that some of these Hmong awaiting resettlement to California are infected with active TB and are receiving treatment. In addition, seventeen Hmong have the multi-drug resistant (MDR) form of the infection. These individuals with active TB have also infected other refugees who are waiting to resettle in California.

Local health departments have received emergency one-time CDC and State funding to identify and treat Hmong refugees infected with TB. However, the impact of TB on our communities will continue for many years to come, as will the cost of controlling and preventing the spread of TB. Containing this outbreak will require a sustained multiyear statewide effort, which exceeds our current capacity.

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The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) has requested \$4,000,000 in federal funds per year for the next three years to support vital TB control efforts. We support the CCLHO funding request and urge you to assist our local health department efforts in preventing the spread of this devastating disease.

Sincerely,



Judith G. Case, Chairman
Fresno County Board of Supervisors

cc: Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senator
Diane Feinstein, U.S. Senator
Congressman Jim Costa
Congressman George Radanovich
Charlotte Hrcir, Alcalde & Fay
Paul Yoder, Legislative Advocate
Board of Supervisors