

STOP TB USA* - ADVOCACY UPDATE!

* Formerly known as the U.S. National Coalition for Elimination of Tuberculosis (NCET).

FROM STOP TB USA Partner, the American Thoracic Society: Domestic TB Bill Advances in the Senate

Action Requested: Contact Your Senators TODAY to Urge a TB Bill Vote

For maximum effectiveness, please contact your two Senators by January 14th. On November 14, 2007, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, chaired by Sen. Kennedy (D-MA), passed the domestic TB control bill, the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act, S. 1551, sponsored by Sens. Brown (D-OH) and Hutchison (R-TX). The committee passed the bill unanimously by voice vote, meaning that no Senators spoke against it. The next step for the bill is a full Senate floor vote, but the bill must gain more bipartisan support before it will be scheduled for a vote. **All ATS members and friends are urged to contact their two Senators TODAY to request their cosponsorship of the bill to ensure the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act proceeds to a Senate floor vote as soon as possible.**

How to Take Action: Call the Capitol Switchboard at 1-202-224-3121 and ask for your Senator or give your state if you do not know their name. When you are connected to an office, ask for the Health Legislative Assistant. If you leave a voicemail message, include your name and phone number so that they can call you back. *The following is a sample phone message: "I am a constituent and a healthcare provider from (your town) and I am calling to ask Sen. ___ to cosponsor the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act, S. 1551, and urge a floor vote on the bill as soon as possible. The bill must be passed this year to prevent outbreaks of drug resistant TB in the U.S. and reinvest in TB research to find easier, more effective diagnostics, drugs and vaccines."* Click on the following link to e-mail your Senator if you are unable to make a phone call: <http://www.thoracic.org/sections/about-ats/advocacy/take-action-now.html>

Other Talking Points:

- TB is the one of the leading infectious disease killers in the world, taking over 1.6 million lives per year.
- The Speaker case illustrated that the U.S. is vulnerable to drug resistant TB
- The current funding level for CDC's Division of TB Elimination represents a 30% decrease over the past decade when adjusted for inflation.
- New tools are needed to more effectively prevent, diagnose, and treat TB.
The standard method of diagnosing TB is over 100 years old and fails to adequately detect TB in children and those co-infected with HIV/AIDS.
- The newest class of TB drugs is over 40 years old and is inadequate for combating drug resistant TB.
- S. 1551 will ensure that the U.S. is prepared to respond to outbreaks of drug resistant TB and will reinvest in TB research to find faster, easier and more effective diagnostics, drugs and vaccines to control TB.

From STOP TB USA Partner RESULTS:

Stop TB Now Act: keep building support. Please keep asking your senators to cosponsor the Stop TB Now Act (H.R.1567, S.968). To move this bill, it is important to build support for its passage. To cosponsor, please contact Sean Moore in Sen. Boxer's office at (202) 224-3553.

Building Support for the Domestic TB Bill. If your members of Congress have indicated that they will support the global TB bill (either by cosponsoring or promising to support it on the floor), your next step is to ask them to support the domestic bill — the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act (S.1551, H.R.1532).

FY 2008 U.S. TB FUNDING

As reported earlier in the **STOP TB USA 1/2/08 TB WIRE**, just prior to recessing for the holidays, the Congress passed an omnibus appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2008 that includes funding for all Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (Labor-HHS-ED), programs, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The President has signed the bill which gives CDC's TB program a notable 2.5% increase to \$140.3 million for domestic TB in FY 08, but the real winners are in the areas of global tuberculosis control where USAID global TB control activities gain a 52% funding surge to \$152 million which will expand U.S. leadership and technical expertise on global TB control.

The final funding levels for Labor-HHS-ED programs are part of a compromise package agreed between the Congress and the President after he vetoed the initial bill because it exceeded his budget levels. The final Labor-HHS-ED bill cut nearly \$10 billion from these programs. Under the bill, the NIH is slated to receive a modest funding increase of 1.1%. Most of this goes for NIH administration activities and a transfer of \$300 million (up \$100 million from FY07) for the U.S. contribution to the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria, so nearly all institutes are actually funded at slightly over the FY07 levels. The CDC will receive a 3.0% increase in FY2008. Included in the CDC budget is newly authorized funding of \$56.5 million for health conditions related to the World Trade Center to be administered under the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), whose budget shows this significant increase.

Global Stop TB Partnership Welcomes Increased US Funding for Global TB Control

From the Global STOP TB Partnership: 7 January 2008 – Geneva:

During the last week of December, President George W. Bush approved US\$153 million in spending for global TB control programmes for 2008--up US\$72 million from 2007 spending. An additional \$150 million is dedicated by the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief to address the TB-HIV co-epidemic in 2008. Dr Marcos Espinal, Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership, applauded this effort. "The U.S. should be commended for its leadership and wise investment in the global fight against TB," he said. "As a recent World Bank study concluded, the economic benefits of TB control are substantially greater than the costs. I would like to thank our partners and advocates in the U.S. Congress for their dedication and persistence. This funding increase will contribute to the implementation of the Global Plan to Stop TB; with direct benefits to men, women and children affected by TB across the globe."

If you wish to receive the **STOP TB USA** messages at a different e-mail address, or if you no longer wish to receive these messages, please reply to jseggerson@tbcoalition.com

Please pass this on to others who are interested in the prevention and control of tuberculosis in the United States and globally!
