



## 4/9/08 ADVOCACY UPDATE!

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STOP TB USA was formerly known as the National Coalition for Elimination of Tuberculosis (NCET).

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**FROM STOP TB USA Partner, the American Thoracic Society:**

### **HOUSE PASSES GLOBAL HIV/AIDS, TB AND MALARIA BILL!**

FROM THE AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY: On April 2, in a victory for TB advocacy efforts and global tuberculosis (TB) control, the U.S. House of Representatives passed broad global health legislation that includes the global tuberculosis bill, the Stop TB Now Act, sponsored by Reps. Engel (D-NY) and Wilson (R-NM). The broader legislation, the Tom Lantos and Henry Hyde U.S. Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act, H.R. 5501, also known as PEPFAR, reauthorizes the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which provides resources for fighting HIV/AIDS, HIV-related TB and malaria in fifteen focus countries. The PEPFAR bill passed the House on a bipartisan vote of 308 - 116. The Stop TB Now Act provides authority and resources for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to play a leading role in eradicating tuberculosis worldwide by committing the U.S. to the Stop TB Partnership's Global Plan to reduce the TB deaths and disease burden by half. Specifically, the bill will: enhance US technical assistance in responding to the global drug resistant TB crisis; support global TB control activities at the USAID, including expansion of directly observed treatment short-course (DOTS) coverage, strengthening of health systems, and promotion of the International Standards of TB Care; and also provide \$4 billion over 5 years for global TB control programs. The Senate version of the PEPFAR bill is awaiting a floor vote, expected within the next few weeks.

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### **SUPPORT THE DOMESTIC LEGISLATION IN THE HOUSE**

FROM THE AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY: Contact Your Representative TODAY to Request Cosponsorship of the Domestic TB bill. The Comprehensive TB Elimination Act, H.R. 1532, sponsored by Reps. Green (D-TX) and Wilson (R-NM), is awaiting action in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, chaired by Rep. Dingell (D-MI). The bill must first be considered by the Health Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Pallone (D-NJ). The Health subcommittee staff have indicated that they are interested in holding a hearing on the bill within the next few months, but we must build more bipartisan support for the bill to ensure this action. Action Requested: Please contact your House Representative to urge their cosponsorship of the bill. If your Representative is a member, please make a special effort to contact them as soon as possible. House Energy & Commerce Health subcommittee members are listed at this website: <http://energycommerce.house.gov/Subcommittees/health.shtml>

### **How to Take Action**

Call the Capitol Switchboard at 1-202-224-3121 and ask for your Representative or give your zipcode 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 Rep. \_\_\_ to cosponsor the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act, H.R. 1532. 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. (If your Rep is a Health subcommittee member – I urge Rep. \_\_\_ to support bringing this bill to a vote in the Health subcommittee as a soon as possible.)

**Talking Points:**

- TB is the one of the leading infectious disease killers in the world, taking over 1.7 million lives per year.
- Recent TB air travel problems illustrated that the U.S. is vulnerable to drug resistant TB
- The current funding level for CDC’s Division of TB Elimination represents a more than 20% 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. H.R. 1532/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.

**Summary of the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act, S. 1551/H.R. 1532**

The bill, sponsored by Reps. Green (D-TX) & Wilson (R-NM) and Sens. Brown (D-OH) & Hutchison (R-TX), will increase funds for the CDC’s National Program for the Elimination of Tuberculosis, including funding for state TB control programs, and expand research on TB diagnostic and treatment tools at the NIH and CDC.

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**DOMESTIC TB BILL ADVANCES IN SENATE**

FROM THE AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY: 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.

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From **STOP TB USA** Partner RESULTS:

**RESULTS URGES SUPPORT OF DOMESTIC BILL IN THE HOUSE**

FROM RESULTS: “Write Your Representative to Urge Support of Domestic TB Bill: Investing in TB control at home and abroad would save thousands of lives! Nearly 9 million people in the world become ill with TB each year, and 1.6 million of them die. While numbers have been declining in the U.S., there are still more than 13,000 cases of active TB reported annually, and an additional 10 to 15 million people have latent TB. TB diagnostic tools are more than 100 years old and often inaccurate, and new antibiotics haven't been developed in more than 40 years. The 85 year-old vaccine in use outside the U.S. is of very limited effectiveness. Because of inefficient, cumbersome, and lengthy diagnostic and treatment methods, many TB cases go undetected or are sporadically treated. As a result, drug-resistant strains are increasing, raising alarming concerns about a future epidemic of virtually untreatable TB.” For the easy-to-use TAKE ACTION ALERT, visit the RESULTS website at this address:

<http://capwiz.com/results/issues/alert/?alertid=10993156>

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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 [jsegerson@tbcoalition.com](mailto:jsegerson@tbcoalition.com)

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