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**Trust for America's Health Receives \$500,000 Grant from
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

Washington, DC – Trust for America's Health (TFAH) announced today that it received a \$500,000 grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to support an educational campaign on public health preparedness.

“This grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is an important bedrock for advancing our mission to serve as a much needed voice fighting to strengthen America's public health defenses,” said Dr. Shelley Hearne, Executive Director of TFAH. “Since September 11, the public is more aware than ever that our health defense system is ill-prepared to protect us not just from the new threats of bioterrorism, but also from the diseases that most affect us, like cancer and asthma.”

A recent poll sponsored by RWJF and conducted by Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc. shows that three-quarters of Americans (75 percent) are *very* or *somewhat concerned* that the emphasis on bioterrorism will leave the public health system spread too thin, detracting from other important issues, such as health education, environmental issues, and immunizations. With this in mind, more than 80 percent of those surveyed said they support increasing federal funding to the public health system, and nearly 70 percent said they are willing to pay higher taxes to see that happen.

“As the country faces difficult budget decisions this year, we should vigilantly watch that funds needed to address a full range of crucial health concerns, including child immunizations and tobacco cessation, aren't diverted to pay for bioterrorism-related activities alone,” Hearne added. “Our communities need and deserve both.”

The grant will support TFAH's ability to raise awareness of the need for a truly multi-purpose public health system. TFAH, which was founded in 2000, advocates for revitalizing the fundamentals of the country's public health system, including disease tracking, laboratories, education, training, and early-warning and communications systems. The organization receives funding from 10 different foundations in addition to RWJF, including The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Joyce Foundation, and the Benjamin Spencer Fund.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, based in Princeton, N.J., is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care. It concentrates its grantmaking in four goal areas: to assure that all Americans have access to basic health care at a reasonable cost; to improve care and support for people with chronic health conditions, to promote healthy communities and lifestyles; and to reduce the personal, social and economic harm caused by substance abuse – tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs.

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Trust for America's Health is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to protect the health and safety of all communities from current and emerging health threats by strengthening the fundamentals of our public health defenses. For more information, visit www.healthyamericans.org.

