



TRUST FOR AMERICA'S HEALTH COMMENDS SENATE'S PROJECT BIOSHIELD FUNDING VOTE, WARNS MUCH MORE NEEDED TO INOCULATE AMERICA FROM BIOTERROR

Contacts: Laura Segal (202) 223-9870 x 278 or lsegal@tfah.org or Michael Earls (202) 223-9870 x 273 or mearls@tfah.org

Washington, DC, May 20, 2004 – The following is a statement from Shelley A. Hearne, DrPH, Executive Director of Trust for America's Health:

“The U.S. Senate approval of \$5.6 billion for Project Bioshield represents one leap forward toward better bioterrorism preparedness in America.

However, many more big strides must still be made to better protect Americans from the threats posed by bioterrorism, chemical terrorism, and radiological terrorism.

Without similar investments in crucial areas – ranging from ensuring our public health labs could adequately identify germs or chemicals used in attacks to bolstering the expert workforce that would be needed to distribute and administer vaccinations – we are still a nation at great risk.

A recent analysis by Trust for America's Health of the President's proposed budget for FY 2005 found a \$105 million dollar decrease in federal funding for state and local bioterrorism preparedness. The proposed FY05 budget also includes a nearly 3 percent cut to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the keystone protectors against pressing national health threats. The dangers of these cuts are greatly compounded by the budget shortfalls and cuts state and local governments are facing.

We applaud the Senate for this strategic investment toward improving vaccines and drugs needed to combat a bioterror attack.

Now, we need to invest in inoculating America from these deadly threats by shoring up the full spectrum of our bioterror and public health preparedness capabilities.”

###

Trust for America's Health is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to saving lives by protecting the health of every community and working to make disease prevention a national priority. www.healthyamericans.org