



WHITE HOUSE PANDEMIC FLU TABLETOP COMMENDABLE BUT STALLED FUNDS TO SUPPORT PREPAREDNESS EFFORTS LEAVE NATION AT UNACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF RISK

Media 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, December 8, 2005 – The following is a statement by Jeffrey Levi, PhD, Senior Policy Advisor at Trust for America's Health (TFAH):

“Trust for America's Health is encouraged that the White House is taking the important step of conducting a top level exercise to test the federal government's response to a pandemic flu outbreak. Practice drills are one of the most effective ways to assess and increase preparedness. Therefore, we hope the results of the exercise will be made fully available to Congress and the public.

We also hope the President will use his political capital to demand that Congress not adjourn for the year until his full flu budget request is passed. A plan on paper without funds to implement it is relatively meaningless. Every day of delay places Americans at unnecessary risk. Time is running out as the threat of a pandemic grows. Congress must act now to take steps to minimize suffering and loss if a pandemic occurs in the near future.”

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.

###