



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.

Public Policy Priorities – 109th Congress

While public health crises like skyrocketing rates of obesity, flu vaccine shortages, and threats of bioterrorism have increased the visibility of the U.S. public health system, they also illustrate how under-prepared the nation is when it comes to protecting the health of all communities.

Trust for America's Health (TFAH) supports the following federal initiatives:

A proactive approach to health focusing on prevention of illness and injury in order to save lives, save money, and make Americans healthier

- ✓ A January 2005 poll conducted by Public Opinion Strategies on behalf of TFAH found a significant majority of Americans support increased federal funding for researching causes and preventing diseases. Adequate resources must be allocated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help provide Americans with the best possible quality of health in every state of life; and the protection from infectious, occupational, environmental and terrorist threats.
- ✓ Obesity has become an epidemic in America, and related chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer are killing millions of Americans each year. Public policies are falling short, and states are failing to meet obesity rate goals for children and adults. TFAH supports establishing an aggressive, coordinated national strategy to address obesity and mitigate the incidence of related diseases.

“PREVENTING -- AND COMBATING -- BIOTERRORISM AND OTHER HEALTH THREATS IS THE UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM. UNFORTUNATELY, PUBLIC HEALTH HAS BEEN NEGLECTED AND UNDER-RESOURCED FOR THE PAST TWO DECADES. NOW, EVEN AS IT'S BEING GIVEN NEW RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM, OUR PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM IS STILL STRUGGLING TO MEET ITS CRUCIAL PEACE TIME COMMITMENTS. WE MUST MAKE PREVENTING EPIDEMICS AND PROTECTING PEOPLE A HIGHER PRIORITY.”

-- Lowell Weicker, Jr., TFAH Board President and former three-term U.S. Senator and Governor from Connecticut

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**PREVENTING EPIDEMICS.
PROTECTING PEOPLE.**

Increased investment in bio- and chemical terrorism preparedness, complementing, rather than competing with existing public health priorities

✓ According to a recent TFAH report, states across the country still struggle to meet basic preparedness requirements and have inadequate resources to address the health priorities they face. Bioterrorism preparedness lacks strategic direction, well-defined priorities, and appropriate resources. TFAH sup-

ports an “all-hazards” approach and policies to assess preparedness programs; provide measurable performance standards; and conduct exercises on hypothetical attacks or outbreaks. TFAH opposes the proposed FY 2006 budget cuts to state and local bioterrorism preparedness programs.

Enhanced infrastructure to more effectively meet 21st century infectious disease outbreaks

✓ Many health experts are concerned that avian bird flu in Asia could mutate into a highly transmissible virus that humans have no natural immunity against. Although planning for a flu pandemic has improved, 20 states still do not have plans in place, and an outbreak would have dire consequences. TFAH supports

improved planning and coordination; a well trained public health workforce; state-of-the-art laboratories; and effective health tracking networks, including bio-monitoring capacity; all of which are critical components of an effective, responsive, modern-day public health system.

Reform of the nation’s vaccine policy, related to safety, effectiveness and availability

✓ Recent data found that 20% of preschool children do not receive all routine vaccinations to protect against a range of childhood diseases. TFAH supports adequate funding for the CDC’s Vaccines for Children and Section 317 programs; incen-

tives to increase participation in vaccine registries; and systematic reforms of vaccine production, supply and distribution. TFAH supports the creation of a comprehensive, integrated, forward-looking revitalization of the nation’s vaccine policy.

PLEASE CONSIDER **TRUST FOR AMERICA’S HEALTH** AS A KEY PUBLIC HEALTH RESOURCE AND SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT **RICHARD HAMBURG** (RHAMBURG@TFAH.ORG), DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, AT (202) 223-9876.



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