Support Funding for the Fight Against Domestic Tuberculosis

From: The Honorable Gene Green
Date: 3/11/2014

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This is a Programmatic Request

Dear Colleague,

Please join us in supporting funding for the fight against domestic tuberculosis (TB) as part of the Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations process. We ask that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s domestic TB program be appropriated $243 million. This funding is needed to strengthen our national efforts to identify, treat and prevent TB infection - including drug resistant TB - prevent shortages of TB drugs, and further efforts to develop new diagnostic, treatment, and prevention tools.

According to the CDC, there are 8.6 million new TB cases in the world every year. TB is the second leading infectious disease killer of adults worldwide and 1.3 million individuals die from the disease. At current rates, tuberculosis could kill 30 million people over the next decade. Every state in the U.S. continues to report cases of TB each year and the disease is a significant public health problem in border-states such as California, Texas, and Florida. Although rates of TB are falling in the U.S., we are not on track to eliminate the disease in this country. The incidence rate of drug resistant TB, which is very complicated and expensive to treat, is steady. In 2012, the U.S. had two cases of extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB, which can cost up to $1 million to treat per case.

Many believe TB is a disease of the past, but it is still a real public health threat due to a lack of resources dedicated to properly treat the disease and develop new, more effective prevention tools. There is an urgent need to develop shorter treatment regimens, faster diagnostics, and vaccines that protect children and adults from all forms of TB.

In order to put the U.S. back on the path to TB elimination, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s domestic TB program must be funded at $243 million in FY2015. If you are interested in signing the letter to support this request, please contact Kristen O'Neill with Rep. Gene Green at kristen.oneill@mail.house.gov or 5-1688, Heidi Ross with Rep. Eliot Engel at heidi.ross@mail.house.gov or 5-2464, or Paul Milotte with Rep. Don Young at paul.milotte@mail.house.gov or 5-5765.
Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you begin to craft legislation making appropriations for fiscal year (FY) 2015, we respectfully submit a request for $243 million in funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s domestic tuberculosis (TB) program, as authorized under the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act (P.L. 110-392), in the Labor-Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies bill. TB is the second leading infectious disease killer in the world. The continued global pandemic, including the rapid spread of drug resistant TB, poses a serious public health threat to the U.S.

The President signed the Comprehensive Tuberculosis Elimination Act into law on October 13, 2008. This historic legislation was based on the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine and revitalized programs at Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Specifically, the bill reauthorizes CDC’s tuberculosis elimination activities, authorizes the development of new tools for the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of tuberculosis, including multidrug-resistant and extensively drug-resistant strains, and intensifies and coordinates basic and clinical research activities with the goal of tuberculosis elimination.

Many believe TB is a disease of the past, but it is still a real public health threat due to a lack of resources dedicated to properly treat the disease and develop new, more effective tools to fight TB. We ask that the FY15 Labor-HHS-ED Appropriations bill include $243 million for CDC’s domestic tuberculosis program to put the U.S. back on the path to TB elimination. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,