

February 26, 2008

Dear Representative:

As you consider the United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act in the Foreign Affairs Committee markup on February 27, the undersigned organizations urge you to support this important legislation that will intensify the U.S.'s leadership on these deadly global diseases. We also ask you to support the Engel-Green amendment to the bill, which will promote TB vaccine research and development.

Tuberculosis (TB) is second only to HIV/AIDS as a leading infectious disease killer, taking at least 1.6 million lives per year. The emergence and spread of drug-resistant strains of TB, including extensively drug-resistant (XDR) TB, has caused tremendous concern around the world. While we urge immediate action in response to the spread of drug resistant TB, we also recognize the best way to prevent the future development of other resistant strains of tuberculosis is through establishing and supporting effective TB control programs throughout the globe. The United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act will provide the resources to ensure the U.S.'s timely response.

New tools are also needed to prevent future infections. The current TB vaccine, BCG, is over 85 years old and is unreliable against pulmonary TB, which accounts for most of the worldwide disease burden. We will never defeat TB without a new and effective vaccine. The Engel-Green amendment would provide authorization through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for support of TB vaccine research and development efforts, mirroring current authorizations for HIV/AIDS and malaria vaccine research and development included under Section 203 of the bill.

We ask you to help the U.S. make the necessary investment in global TB control by passing the United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act and to support efforts to develop an effective TB vaccine by passing the Engel amendment. If have any questions or require additional information, please contact Nuala S. Moore, Sr. Legislative Representative with the American Thoracic Society (ATS), at 202.296.9770, x. 17. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation
American Lung Association
American Public Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Families USA Global Health Initiative
Global Health Council
HIV Medicine Association
Infectious Diseases Society of America
RESULTS
Treatment Action Group