



3/26/10

TB ADVOCACY UPDATE!

Stop TB USA was formerly known as the National Coalition for Elimination of Tuberculosis (NCET). Please pass this information on to your colleagues who are interested in TB elimination.

We have been asked to pass on this update from Nuala Moore of Stop TB USA Partner, the American Thoracic Society:

AMERICAN THORACIC SOCIETY (ATS) CONVENES WORLD TB DAY CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING

In honor of World TB Day on March 24, the ATS held a briefing in the House of Representatives that featured a very moving presentation by a young American man, Max Woodliff, who was infected with multi-drug resistant (MDR) tuberculosis while traveling in Central Asia in 2008. Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY), congressional sponsor of the briefing, thanked Mr. Woodliff for his courage in coming to DC to speak publicly about his experience on the harsh MDR-TB regimen, and said his story points to the urgent need for new TB drugs. Mr. Woodliff, who compared some of the TB antibiotics to chemotherapy, echoed this point by directly appealing for more research on TB "so that fewer people have to go through what I have been through." The briefing panel was moderated by Phil Lobue, MD, from the CDC Division of TB Elimination, who gave an overview of new national data that shows a significant decline in TB in the U.S. The panel's other speakers included Diana Weil, Policy Coordinator for the World Health Organization, who gave an overview of the new WHO TB surveillance report, ATS member Randall Reves, MD, who presented the new Stop TB USA TB Elimination Plan, and Ann Ginsberg, Medical Officer with the TB Alliance, who discussed the organization's work developing new TB drugs, including the new Critical Path Initiative with the FDA and pharmaceutical companies.



MDR TB Survivor Max Woodliff meets Congressman Eliot Engel (D-NY), a longtime supporter of TB initiatives in the US House of Representatives

ACTION ALERT - 2011 TB Funding - Contact Your Members of Congress Now!

March 2010 – President Obama released his FY2011 proposed budget for all federal programs on February 1. The President’s budget signals the start of the annual appropriations (program funding) process by serving as a guideline for the House and Senate appropriations committees to draft the annual appropriations bills. The budget recommends \$143 million for CDC’s domestic TB program, a proposed \$1.2 million cut, targeted to come from travel expenses. It is important to note that at this point, and until Congress has passed the health spending bill, expected sometime in the Summer or Fall, this cut is simply a proposal.

Congress will begin drafting the FY2011 health spending bill, which includes TB funding, in April, beginning with the House Labor-HHS (Health and Human Services) Appropriations subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Obey (D-WI). The House Appropriations subcommittees are expected to begin voting on spending bills in June.

Put a Face on TB

It is essential that TB advocates “put a face” on TB by discussing patient cases. You do not need to give names or counties where patients live, just tell a brief story about the difficulties that individual patients face such as losing their job because of the side effects of medications, harshness of the MDR treatment regimen, etc.

Action Issue 1 – If your Representative is listed below, contact them by 4/23 to urge them to prevent a cut to CDC’s TB program in the 2011 health spending bill and instead provide an urgently needed investment into eliminating TB in the US!

Members of the House Labor-HHS subcommittee:

Obey (WI), Chair	Lowey (D-NY)
DeLauro (D-CT)	Jackson (D-IL)
Kennedy (D-RI)	Roybal-Allard (D-CA)
B. Lee (D-CA)	Honda (D-CA)
McCollum (D-MN)	Ryan (R-OH)
Moran (D-VA)	
Tiahrt (R-KS)	Rehburg (R-MT)
Alexander (R-LA)	Bonner (R-AL)
Cole (R-OK)	

Action Issue 2 – Call your Senators!

Targeted Senators (members of the Labor-HHS Subcommittee):

Harkin (D-IA)	Inouye (D-HI)	Kohl (D-WI)	Murray (D-WA)
Landrieu (D-LA)	Durbin (D-IL)	Reed (D-RI)	Pryor (D-AR)
Specter (D-PA)	Cochran (R-MS)	Gregg (R-NH)	Hutchison (R-TX)
Shelby (R-AL)	Alexander (R-TN)		

Congress passed the bipartisan Comprehensive TB Elimination Act in October 2008. This new law recommended a funding level of \$220 million for CDC’s domestic TB program in FY2011. TB advocates must educate their members of Congress, particularly members of the House and

Senate Labor-HHS subcommittees, about this funding level and the reasons why TB programs needs this increased funding.

How to Contact Your Representative/Senators

Call the Capitol Switchboard at 1-202-224-3121 and ask for your Rep/Sen. or give your zip code if you do not know their name. When you are connected to an office, ask for the Appropriations/Health Legislative Assistant. If you leave a voicemail message, include your name and phone number so that they can call you back.

The following is a sample phone/e-mail message: " I am a constituent and a healthcare provider from (your town) and I am calling to ask Rep/Sen. _____ to prevent a recommended cut to CDC's domestic TB program recommended under the President's Fy2011 budget. I am concerned that if the TB program is cut that states will be vulnerable to resurgences of TB, including outbreaks of drug resistant TB. Due to state budget cuts, many states are struggling to maintain their programs and treat steady cases of drug resistant TB, which is very expensive and complicated to treat.

The Comprehensive TB Elimination Act, passed in 2008, authorized \$220 million for CDC's TB program for FY2011. I understand that the 2011 budget is restricted, but I ask you to prevent a cut to CDC's TB program and provide a needed funding increase. This funding will also support CDC research into new tools to reduce the global TB pandemic. Thank you."

(Supplement your message with state TB data such as number of drug resistant cases, etc). Leave your name & phone number on voicemails so that staffers can call you back.

Talking Points:

- TB is the second leading infectious disease killer in the world, taking over 1.8 million lives per year.
- Recent cases of drug resistant TB have illustrated that the U.S. is vulnerable to drug resistant TB.
- Drug resistant TB costs \$100-300K to treat vs. non-DR costs of \$10-12K annually
- New tools are needed to more effectively prevent, diagnose, and treat TB. The newest class of TB drugs is over 40 years old and is inadequate for combating drug resistant TB. The vaccine is only used for children in developing countries, as it has little efficacy in preventing adult pulmonary TB.

Please contact Nuala Moore, at Nmoore@thoracic.org, if you have any questions.

If you wish to receive the **STOP TB USA** messages at a different e-mail address, or if you no longer wish to receive these messages, please reply to jseggerson@tbcoalition.com

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