Why Does Global Health Matter to Nevada?

Probably for more reasons than you think. Even though the term "global health" refers to diseases and health issues that disproportionately affect developing countries, global health matters to Nevada. It matters to Nevada's economy and to Nevadans' health.

Nevada has global ties . . .

- **. . . through trade and commerce.**

  In 2007, Nevada exported $5.7 billion worth of goods to 169 foreign destinations. Some of Nevada's trade partners are developing countries in Asia, Africa, and South America.

- **. . . through foreign investment.**

  Nevada benefits from foreign investment and the creation of "in-sourced jobs"—employment by companies that are based outside the United States. About 30,100 Nevadans work for foreign-owned companies, which invest in Nevada's economy as they expand their operations in the Silver State.

- **. . . through travel and tourism.**

  Every day, some 2,800 passengers depart from cities all over the world destined for Nevada's McCarran and Reno-Tahoe International Airports. Among the arrivals are international tourists and business people who spend millions of dollars a year in Nevada, generating wages and jobs that contribute significantly to the state's economy.

- **. . . through its colleges and universities.**

  In the 2006-2007 academic year, 3,200 foreign students studied at Nevada universities. International students and their families contributed $70 million to the state's economy.

Global Ties Benefit Nevada

Nevada's global ties benefit the state's economy, providing billions of dollars in revenue and thousands of jobs. For example, one in seven manufacturing workers in Nevada depends on international exports for his or her job.

These Ties Can Be Jeopardized by Global Health Crises

Nevada's global ties link the state's economic health to the health and economic growth of other countries and regions. When health care crises in other countries threaten economic and political stability, they can end up affecting Nevada as well.

What's the Link between Health and Wealth?

Epidemics and other health crises affect the ability of entire communities to work and limit the potential for economies to develop. The following examples illustrate the link between global health and economic development:

- Malaria costs Africa $12 billion in lost economic output every year. It is estimated that without malaria, the economic output of several African countries, some of which are important trade partners for Nevada businesses, would be 30 percent greater than it is today. Nevada exports $42 million worth of goods to Africa every year.

- UNAIDS estimates that the HIV rate in China is rising by 20-30 percent every year. China is a valuable trading partner for Nevada, purchasing nearly $352 million worth of Nevada exports in 2007 alone.

Research to Improve Global Health Benefits Nevada

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is a world leader in biomedical research that improves health in the United States and around the world. Most of the research that is funded by NIH is conducted on university campuses across the country. NIH awards many grants to Nevada universities, which in turn bring money and jobs to Nevada. In 2007, Nevada received approximately $22 million in research grants and contracts from NIH. Some of this research will go on to spur innovations in medicine that will improve domestic and global health. Grants from NIH bring jobs and higher wages to Nevada at the same time that they help the world to make progress in global health.

International Visitors Bring the Global Economy to the Silver State

As the U.S. economy is experiencing a downturn and more Americans are cutting back on vacation travel, states like Nevada are looking to attract more international visitors. Now more than ever, it is important to let the rest of the world know about the diversity of Nevada's tourist offerings, from breathtaking mountain ranges and lakes to the dazzling sights and sounds of Las Vegas.

Vacationers from Asia and Europe (even as far as Africa) are becoming increasingly important contributors to the state's income. In 2005, for example, international tourists visiting Nevada spent almost $3 billion, supporting more than 40,000 jobs and bringing in more than $360 million in tax revenues. In 2007, Nevada received almost 8 percent (1.77 million) of the United States' share of international visitors, a 5 percent increase in visitors from the previous year.

Developing countries also constitute a large share of Nevada's tourist industry. Countries like Mexico, India, and China are a top priority for Nevada's tourism officials, who are trying to win a portion of these booming new markets for Nevada. Mexico is Nevada's third largest international market. In 2007, 346,000 Mexicans visited Las Vegas, each spending approximately $1,300 in the city. Nevada has set up an office that promotes tourism in China and is looking to do the same in India, recognizing that, as these developing countries enter the global village, they represent significant potential business for Nevada.

However, the continued growth of international tourist markets like China, India, and Mexico can be slowed by ailing health. Global health crises like HIV/AIDS will limit the economic growth and viability of these new economies. Improving health around the world is as much of an investment in the prosperity of the United States and Nevada as it is a boost to the health and vitality of the countries whose citizens visit Nevada.

Conclusion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are taking the lead in the research and development of drugs and vaccines aimed at improving global health and lessening the impact of deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria.

To find out how we can accelerate the search for better medical technologies, please visit www.familiesusa.org/issues/global-health.

Sources available upon request from Families USA.

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