



A Global Health Initiative **FACT-SHEET**

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CDC Suffers under the President's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget

The President's fiscal year (FY) 2008 budget limits our nation's capacity to respond to public health problems at home and abroad by shortchanging the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the nation's first line of defense against new and re-emerging health threats.

The President's proposed budget for the CDC *falls \$1.9 billion short* of meeting the \$10.7 billion that the agency will need in 2008 to avoid compromising any aspects of its mission to protect the public's health.

A strong public health infrastructure is vitally important to protecting Americans and people around the world from disease. Cuts to the CDC budget undermine both the U.S. and the global public health infrastructures.

The CDC's Activities Are of Paramount Importance

Our global community faces a wide range of public health challenges, including some that are just emerging. The President's budget proposal compromises the CDC's ability to respond to both current health challenges and future threats.

- The CDC's mission involves identifying impending public health emergencies (surveillance) and containing such emergencies before they spiral out of control.
 - In addition, many of the CDC's core programs involve efforts to reduce the prevalence of illnesses that are daily realities for millions of people, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), malaria, and other illnesses. These programs carry out clinical research that is essential to the testing of promising therapies. The CDC's work on research and development, both domestically and worldwide, is as important as preparing for potential public health threats.
 - At a time of increasing health challenges and infectious disease threats such as avian flu, SARS, and drug-resistant TB, the CDC plays a vital role in conducting disease surveillance, prevention, and control to protect the health of Americans and our neighbors around the globe.
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The President's Budget Proposal Falls Short

The President's budget request of \$8.822 billion would leave the CDC with a budget that is about \$1.9 billion short of what the agency will need in 2008. This is 18 percent below the amount of funding needed by the agency to fulfill its public health mission – a shortfall of huge proportions.

- The President's \$8.822 billion budget would not even allow the agency to maintain all of its programs at their current level of funding, let alone expand them. Instead of giving the CDC a much-needed increase, the President slashed the CDC's budget by \$254 million from its 2007 level.
- Just to keep up with inflation, the CDC's budget would need to grow by at least 3.7 percent, or \$591 million, above the 2007 level of \$9.077 billion. However, funding at this minimum level will not enable the CDC to fulfill its entire mission. The agency estimates that it will need a total of \$10.7 billion to execute its entire mission in 2008.

The CDC must be funded at a minimum of \$10.7 billion. That's what is needed to ensure that the agency can adequately respond to the health challenges that are an urgent reality for millions of people and take on new and emerging threats to health and security.

Cuts to the CDC Affect the U.S. and the World

The CDC is on the front lines of disease control and prevention for the U.S. and the entire globe. Its staff around the world works with governments to identify and control outbreaks before they spread. The agency also monitors disease trends and carries out much-needed research and development of vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments.

It is in our national interest to ensure that the CDC has the funding it needs to combat global infectious disease pandemics, including HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB, which together kill 6 million people each year and leave millions more sick or incapacitated.

- First, we have a **national health interest** in ensuring that the CDC has all the resources it needs. Diseases can easily spread across international borders. Epidemics abroad, including lethal strains of extremely drug-resistant TB, can lead to cases here at home. Americans who travel abroad, including our troops, are also at risk of contracting infectious diseases that are endemic in other countries.
- Second, we have a **national economic interest** in providing the CDC with all the resources it requires. In regions where HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB are most prevalent, economic growth is hindered because countries' entire workforces suffer from substantially reduced productivity. With globalization, countries' economies are extensively intertwined. The economic toll of diseases hurts world economic growth and limits trade, and it reduces markets for U.S. goods.

- Third, we have a **national political interest** in giving the CDC the funding it needs to combat infectious diseases. In areas of the world where the infectious disease burden is greatest, massive numbers of people are getting sick and dying. Populations are being decimated. The social structures of entire countries have been unraveling, paving the way for political unrest and the undermining of democracy in entire regions of the world.
- Fourth, we have a **national diplomatic interest**, and there are **strong humanitarian reasons** as well, for funding the CDC's work in preventing and controlling diseases that burden millions of people around the world. As the wealthiest country on earth, we have the means to advance health and alleviate human suffering. Using our wealth to improve global health improves America's image and serves as a very effective foreign policy tool.

Although the global need for advancements in the prevention and control of disease is great, our investment has fallen far short. The CDC estimates that in 2007, it will spend less on global health than it did in 2006, even without adjusting for inflation.¹ By failing to adequately fund the CDC, the President's 2008 budget further threatens our effort to address global health issues and undermines one of the most positive foreign policy tools we have at our disposal.

Need for Action

The President's proposed budget shortchanges the CDC, limiting our capacity to combat current global pandemics and hindering our ability to tackle new outbreaks before they spread.

We urge Congress to reject the President's budget and recognize the importance of the CDC. Congress can do this by providing \$10.7 billion for the CDC in FY 2008 (\$1.898 billion above the President's proposal).

We further urge Congress to acknowledge, in a report accompanying the budget legislation,² the importance of expanding funding for global health research and the development of ways to treat and prevent the leading causes of illness and mortality around the world, including HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria.

America and the world look to the CDC to prevent the spread of disease and combat illnesses that devastate humanity. Shortchanging the CDC forces the agency to fight global disease with one hand tied behind its back. The American people, and others around the world, will pay the ultimate price.

Endnotes

¹ Funding amounts by CDC functional area, as enacted for fiscal year 2006 and estimated for fiscal year 2007, are available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/fmo/PDFs/FY07FundFunctAreaTable.pdf>.

² The House and Senate Appropriations Committees prepare reports that accompany the appropriations legislation and that clarify the intent of members of Congress regarding the legislation.

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