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Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting an Emergency Appropriations Request for Fiscal Year 2015 To Implement a Comprehensive Ebola Containment, Preparedness, and Prevention Strategy

November 5, 2014

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Today, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed emergency appropriations request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 that includes $6.18 billion to implement a comprehensive strategy to contain and end the Ebola outbreak at its source in Africa, enhance domestic preparedness, speed the procurement and testing of vaccines and therapeutics, and accelerate global capability to prevent the spread of future infectious diseases.

The request includes $4.64 billion for immediate needs and $1.54 billion in contingency funding to ensure that there are resources available to respond to the evolving epidemic both domestically and internationally. This funding structure was used by the Congress in 2009 for the emergency supplemental for the H1N1 pandemic influenza.

My foremost priority is to protect the health and safety of Americans, and this request supports all necessary steps to fortify our domestic health system and prevent any outbreaks at home. Over the longer term, my Administration recognizes that the best way to prevent additional cases at home will be to contain and eliminate the epidemic at its source in Africa.

Specifically, the request includes resources for domestic hospital and State and local preparedness; resources to support training as well as the acquisition of appropriate protective equipment; medical and non-medical management of Ebola treatment units and community care centers; infection control; contact tracing; laboratory capacity; disease surveillance; emergency operation centers; education and outreach; burial teams; addressing food insecurity and other adverse impacts of the outbreak in affected areas; and testing and development of new vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics.

The request also includes resources to strengthen global health security by reducing risks to Americans by enhancing the capacity of vulnerable countries to prevent disease outbreaks, detect them early, and swiftly respond before they become epidemics that threaten our national security. The Global Health Security Agenda will accelerate and expand international capabilities to deter infectious disease threats like Ebola, by: standing up emergency operations centers; providing equipment and training needed to test patients and report data in real-time; providing safe and secure laboratory capacity; and developing a trained workforce to track and end outbreaks before they become epidemics. These are the same activities that are necessary to combat the spread of Ebola and reduce the potential for future outbreaks of infectious diseases that could follow a similarly devastating, costly, and destabilizing trajectory.

My Administration requests that the funding described above be designated as emergency requirements pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended.

I urge the Congress to act expeditiously in considering this important request, the details of which are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

Categories: Communications to Congress : Comprehensive Ebola containment, preparedness, and prevention strategy, letter transmitting emergency appropriations request for Fiscal Year 2015.

Names: Boehner, John A.

Subjects: Africa : West Africa, Ebola epidemic, response and containment efforts; Budget, Federal : Appropriations :: Emergency supplemental; Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Congress : House of Representatives :: Speaker; Diseases : Ebola, domestic response and containment efforts; Health and medical care : Research and development.

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