

108TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. RES. 208

Expressing the sense of the Senate in support of improving American defenses against the spread of infectious diseases.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 31 (legislative day, JULY 21), 2003

Mr. AKAKA submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate in support of improving American defenses against the spread of infectious diseases.

Whereas the Central Intelligence Agency's January 2000 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), The Global Infectious Disease Threat and Its Implications for the United States, found that infectious diseases are a leading cause of death worldwide and that "New and reemerging infectious diseases will pose a rising global health threat and will complicate U.S. and global security over the next 20 years";

Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that infectious diseases accounted for more than 11,000,000 deaths in 2001;

Whereas the NIE observed the number of infectious diseases related deaths within the United States had increased, having doubled to 170,000 since 1980;

Whereas the General Accounting Office noted in its August 2001 report, *Global Health: Challenges in Improving Infectious Disease Surveillance Systems*, that most of the infectious disease deaths occur in the developing world, but that infectious diseases pose a threat to people in all parts of the world because diseases know no boundaries;

Whereas the NIE remarked that the increase in international air travel and trade will “dramatically increase the prospects,” that infectious diseases will “spread quickly around the globe, often in less time than the incubation period of most diseases”;

Whereas, the NIE commented that many infectious diseases, like the West Nile virus, come from outside U.S. borders and are introduced by international travelers, immigrants, returning U.S. military personnel, or imported animals or foodstuffs;

Whereas diseases coming from overseas such as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), and West Nile virus have had or could have a serious impact on the health and welfare of the U.S. population;

Whereas the NIE found that war, natural disasters, economic collapse, and human complacency around the world are causing a breakdown in health care delivery and helping the emergence or reemergence of infectious diseases;

Whereas, the danger of an outbreak of a deadly disease overseas affecting the United States is increasing;

Whereas the rapid and easy transport of diseases to the United States underscores that Americans are now part of a global public health system;

Whereas the General Accounting Office emphasized that “disease surveillance provides national and international public health authorities with information they need to plan and manage to control these diseases”;

Whereas the early warning of a disease outbreak is key to its identification, the quick application of countermeasures and the development of cures;

Whereas the United States should strengthen its ability to detect foreign diseases before such diseases reach U.S. borders;

Whereas the G–8 group of industrialized countries at the 2003 Evian summit made a commitment to fight against AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria; encouraged research into diseases affecting mostly developing countries; committed to working closely with the World Health Organization; and recognized that the spread of SARS “demonstrates the importance of global collaboration, including global disease surveillance, laboratory, diagnostic and research efforts, and prevention, care, and treatment”;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) plays an important role in foreign disease surveillance, and a key CDC program to strengthen global disease surveillance is its training of foreign specialists in modern epidemiology through its Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs);

Whereas the CDC’s FETPs have existed for almost 20 years working with ministries of health around the world and the World Health Organization, and that currently

FETPs are in 30 countries throughout the world to support disease detection and provide an essential link in global surveillance; and

Whereas the work of the FETPs is critical to establishing a first line of defense overseas to protect the health of American citizens: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

2               (1) the Centers for Disease Control and Preven-  
3       tion’s Field Epidemiology Training Programs and  
4       related epidemic services and global surveillance pro-  
5       grams should receive full support;

6               (2) the President should require an annual Na-  
7       tional Intelligence Estimate on the global infectious  
8       disease threat and its implications for the United  
9       States;

10              (3) the President should propose to the G–8  
11       that the G–8 develop and implement a program to  
12       train foreign epidemiological specialists in the devel-  
13       oping world; and

14              (4) the international community should increase  
15       funding for the World Health Organization’s global  
16       disease surveillance capability.

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