

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 4, 2016

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Subcommittee Chairman Graham, Subcommittee Ranking Member Leahy, Subcommittee Chairman Blunt, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Murray:

We respectfully request that you fully fund the President's Fiscal Year 2016 emergency supplemental request of \$1.9 billion to combat the Zika virus outbreak, without undermining ongoing efforts to address the Ebola epidemic. As the Zika public health emergency continues to grow, a robust and rapid U.S. response is critical to better understand the virus and to protect those most at risk, but it must not come at the expense of our other urgent global health efforts.

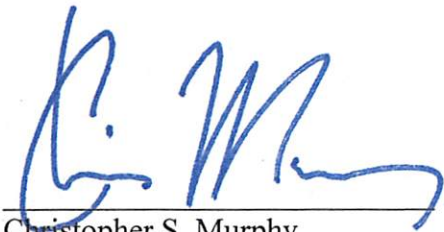
On February 1, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the virus a public health emergency after it spread to more than two dozen countries and territories throughout the Americas and Pacific Islands, including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Zika has been linked with microcephaly, a serious birth defect that results in head and brain abnormalities, and, in severe cases, long-term cognitive consequences including developmental delay, problems with vision, and epilepsy in children. Zika has also been tied to Guillain-Barré syndrome, which can cause muscle weakness and in some cases, paralysis. As of February 17, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported 82 laboratory-confirmed, travel-related Zika cases in the continental United States. The WHO projects the Zika virus could affect up to 4 million people in 2016, highlighting the urgency of a coordinated response to combat it.

At the same time, the United States must continue to work with our international partners to confront a number of persistent and serious epidemics, including the Ebola virus that has caused more than 11,300 deaths since 2014. We must remain vigilant to help the countries most severely impacted by Ebola – Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone – address new cases, build up their public health infrastructures, and develop and stockpile vaccines and treatments for future

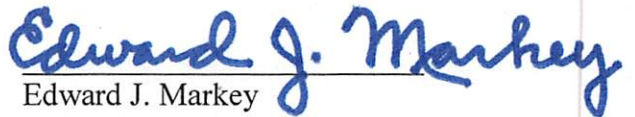
outbreaks. Dramatically reducing funding for the Ebola account now, in order to fund efforts against this new threat, would increase health risks worldwide while also sending a troubling message about the U.S. commitment to ending the current epidemic and preparing for future outbreaks.

As health officials in the region prepare for increased transmission of Zika in the coming spring and summer months, the United States must be ready with a robust response. The President's emergency supplemental request will help fund laboratory testing, education, and the research and development of new vaccines, as well as establish surveillance and rapid response efforts. We therefore respectfully urge you to fully fund this emergency request without neglecting our critical efforts to address other global health priorities.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



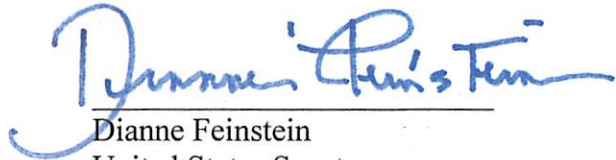
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



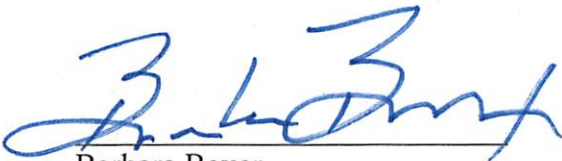
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



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United States Senator



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
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