

We know that one of our best opportunities to limit the scope and consequences of any outbreak is to rapidly detect the emergence of a new strain that is capable of sustained human-to-human transmission. Yet we are not devoting enough resources to effective surveillance abroad.

We all know that State and local health departments will be on the front lines of a pandemic and health care providers must develop surge capacity plans so they can respond to a pandemic.

This Congress is poised to approve a \$130 million cut for State and local preparedness funding for the Centers for Disease Control. That is in the President's budget—a \$130 million cut.

We also know once a flu strain has been identified, we need to develop a vaccine. That takes time, some say as long as 8 months. Our existing stock of vaccines, assuming they are effective against a future, as yet unidentified, strain may protect less than 1 percent of all Americans. And we have only one domestic flu vaccine manufacturer located in the United States.

It is estimated that if our capacity to produce a vaccine is not improved, it could take 15 months to vaccinate the first responders, medical personnel and other high risk groups.

We know it will take months to develop, produce, and distribute a vaccine once we have had it perfected. But we must rely on antiviral medicines as a stopgap against this pandemic. Other nations that certainly do not have the resources we have, including Great Britain, France, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, Finland, and New Zealand have ordered enough of this Tamiflu, an antiviral pill, to cover up to 40 percent of their population. We have virtually nothing.

The consequences of a pandemic could be far reaching, impacting virtually every sector of our society and our economy. Yet we have not taken appropriate action to prepare the medical community, business community, or the American public so they can take necessary steps to prepare for and respond to an avian flu outbreak.

This great country of ours can do better. We have to. We cannot afford to wait to do better. That is why I am so happy to join my friends in sponsoring this amendment.

To put this amendment in perspective, this amendment calls for \$3.9 billion in emergency funds for pandemic flu preparedness at the CDC. To put this amount in perspective, the cost of our amendment is less than what we spend in 1 month on the war in Iraq—far less than we spend in 1 month there. We are facing the real prospect of another war here at home called the flu. This amendment would go a long way toward committing the resources necessary to fighting and winning the war.

People say, well, where are we going to get the money? We have no choice. The American people deserve it. We

can't stay back saying we will do it tomorrow. We need to do it today and I want everyone within the sound of my voice to know this is not a partisan issue. We need Republicans and Democrats to support this effort because this flu is going to strike us all.

This is not meant to be alarmist. It is meant to let everyone know the time is here to do something about this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, we have several minutes remaining before we move on. I take this opportunity to assure the minority leader that I was in the same briefing. I think all Members were somewhat shocked at some of the things we heard. This is a Member who was not shocked because I have been charged as a subcommittee chairman since the beginning of the year with looking at all the aspects of this. I read daily the international press reports of how many new cases of avian flu, in what country, how many humans have contracted it from an animal source, how many humans potentially have contracted it from another human. The reality is this is something that from a committee standpoint we keep up with. We understand the sense of urgency. I plead with my colleagues that the answer is not to throw money at the threat. It is to have a comprehensive plan where research and the investment for that research pays off in countermeasures to protect the American people.

Senator HARKIN described very well that what is H5N1 avian flu in most of Southeast Asia today, by the time it travels, whether it is by humans or potentially by wild birds, the mutations that may take place might make irrelevant any vaccine that is produced today and antivirals that exist today, used to treat it might have potentially less than a satisfactory effect. Without a system that invests in research and development, how in the world do we expect new antiviral drugs and new vaccines to be produced?

To suggest that we put all our eggs into this limited approach—let's put this money up, and let's buy whatever is available on the marketplace—is comforting if, in fact, we believe this is a threat for tomorrow or next week or next month. The reality is this pandemic may occur next year or 3 years or 5 years down the road, and if we want to protect the American people, if we want to do our job, then you have to set up a comprehensive mechanism for that research, that development, and whatever product is needed to address the threat we may face.

Again, I commend those Members who have come to the floor and proposed the appropriations for this item. I disagree that this is the appropriate bill. I disagree that you should appropriate this much money or any money without a comprehensive plan as to how we produce countermeasures that continue past this one appropriations.

I pledge to the minority leader and to Senator HARKIN, but more importantly

to every Member of this body, to work with them aggressively over the next 60 days to not only produce legislation out of the subcommittee, but to work with my chairman, Chairman ENZI, and to work with both leaders and all 100 Senators to make sure this legislation is passed in this body and by the House of Representatives, and signed into law by this President. I believe that it is that urgent. But, there is also a requirement for us to do it right, in fact, that is the single most important factor that we should consider.

I yield the floor.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business until 4 p.m.

The Senator from Wyoming.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 1886 TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to continue the discussion we were having. I cannot tell you how disappointed I am that the first amendment on the Department of Defense appropriations bill is one dealing with avian flu. If that is the most important amendment the other side of the aisle has for the Department of Defense bill, we ought to go ahead and vote on the appropriations bill as a whole right now. That is not the appropriate place to put it.

To make it sound as though nobody is working on this issue and no money is available is a total disservice to the agencies that work on it and this body as a whole. We have been working on it. We have been working on it partly through the Katrina episode, making sure vaccines and other items that were needed for whatever would be available down there in a timely manner. Fortunately, we already had some laws in effect that allowed the Secretary of Health and Human Services to take some emergency action to put items in place and get things done. We will be reviewing that to see if they worked as well as they could.

We have had a bioshield fund in place for a while. That bioshield fund has money in it to do what needs to be done on any kind of terrorism or pandemic that comes up. What we have lacked is the plan. Actually, the plan falls under the jurisdiction of my committee, and we have been working on it. I divided the committee up—and Senator HARKIN is on the committee—to more closely follow the acronym of our office. We are the HELP Committee, and we are in charge of health and education and labor and pensions.

Of course, we have been devoting a tremendous amount of time recently to getting a pensions bill ready so it can be debated on the floor on a moment's notice. It is ready to go. There is a lot of agreement on both sides of the aisle, so we can get that out of here pretty