



Actions by Congress & The Obama Administration on H1N1 & Pandemic Flu

The information below was compiled from the Kaiser Family Foundation's U.S. Global Health Policy Tracker – an online resource providing a single reference point for the latest information on Congressional and Administrative action on global health, including the status of key legislation, policies and programs, government reports, hearings, events, and more – and other sources including the Library of Congress (Thomas) and the U.S. government Pandemic Flu website. It is intended to provide key highlights of U.S. government actions, but not meant to be an exhaustive list. Unless otherwise noted, all actions listed have occurred since the Administration declared H1N1 to be a public health emergency, on April 26, 2009. For more information, please visit:

- Kaiser Family Foundation's U.S. Global Health Policy Tracker: <http://globalhealth.kff.org/Policy-Tracker.aspx>
- Department of Health and Human Services Pandemic Flu Information: www.pandemicflu.gov

Congress:

Legislative Actions:

- H.R. 2346 – Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2009: Includes \$7.7 billion for pandemic flu response and preparedness. (Signed by the President, June 24, 2009.)
- H.R. 2596 - To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a demonstration program to test the feasibility of using the Nation's elementary and secondary schools as influenza vaccination centers.
- S.953 - A bill to provide for the establishment of programs and activities to increase influenza vaccination rates through the provision of free vaccines.

Congressional Hearings & Caucus Briefings:

- Main hearings addressing the H1N1 virus and/or U.S. preparedness to address pandemic flu:
 - o Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: April 29, 2009, June 3, 2009, June 16, 2009;
 - o Senate Committee on Appropriations: April 28, 2009, May 7, 2009;
 - o Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions: April 29, 2009;
 - o House Committee on Foreign Affairs: May 6, 2009; and
 - o House Committee on Energy and Commerce: April 30, 2009.
- Global Health Caucus briefing on H1N1: May 7, 2009.

Member Statements on H1N1:

Many members of Congress have released statements addressing the H1N1 virus outbreak and U.S. preparedness to address pandemic flu including several in leadership positions such as Speaker of the House Pelosi, Senate Minority Leader McConnell, and Representative Obey (Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations).

GAO Reports:

- "Influenza Pandemic: Sustaining Focus on the Nation's Planning and Preparedness Efforts" (February 26, 2009)
- "Influenza Pandemic: Increased Agency Accountability Could Help Protect Federal Employees Serving the Public in the Event of a Pandemic" (June 12, 2009)

Obama Administration:

White House:

- Statements and Updates:
 - o President Obama provided an update on U.S. efforts to address H1N1 during a press conference on April 30, 2009.
 - o President Obama discussed the U.S. response to H1N1 during his weekly address on May 2, 2009.
- Funding Requests: President Obama has made two requests of Congress for additional funding to address pandemic flu, including a \$1.5 billion request on April 28, 2009 and a \$2 billion request on June 2, 2009. In addition, on June 2, the President asked Congress to grant him the authority to access existing funds for potential flu preparedness and response efforts previously authorized to The Departments of Health and Human Services and Homeland Security, and under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.



Departments & Agencies:

- Departments and Agencies involved include The Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Homeland Security (DHS), State, Defense (DoD), Agriculture (USDA), and Education.
- Public Emergency Declaration: On April 26, 2009 officials from HHS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and DHS announced that the U.S. had declared the H1N1 virus outbreak a “public health emergency.”
- Treatment Stockpiles: On April 30, 2009, HHS Secretary Sebelius authorized the purchase of 13 million treatment courses to replenish the strategic stockpile after 11 million treatment courses were released to help state efforts.
- Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis and Administration officials from the DHS and CDC held a Spanish-language town hall meeting on the H1N1 virus in partnership with Univision on May 8, 2009.
- Vaccine Development:
 - o Secretary Sebelius directed almost \$1 billion for clinical trials and production preparation of potential flu vaccines on May 22, 2009.
 - o On June 23, 2009, Secretary Sebelius announced a \$35 million contract for vaccine production that utilizes a new method where “vaccine candidates, clinical investigation lots, and commercial-scale vaccine production may be available faster than by using traditional vaccine production methods.”
- Foreign Coordination and Assistance:
 - o USAID announced it would provide “\$5 million to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in emergency support for efforts to detect and contain the disease in Mexico” on April 28, 2009.
 - o Secretary Sebelius announced that HHS would “begin moving 400,000 treatment courses to Mexico to help slow the spread of the H1N1 virus” on April 30, 2009.
 - o Secretary Sebelius addressed the World Health Assembly Plenary Session on May 19, 2009 and discussed U.S. efforts in coordination with international partners to address H1N1.