



# COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

## CHAIRWOMAN BARBARA A. MIKULSKI

For Immediate Release

Date: September 16, 2014

Contact: Vince Morris (202) 224-1010

### STATEMENT OF CHAIRWOMAN MIKULSKI AT JOINT COMMITTEE HEARING ON THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

*Says we need a roadmap for immediate response to this human tragedy and global threat as well as for long range public health needs*

**WASHINGTON—U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.)**, Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today participated in a joint Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Subcommittee and Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee hearing on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

*Senator Mikulski's statement, as prepared for delivery, follows:*

"I would like to thank Senators Harkin, Moran, and Alexander for holding this hearing.

"The Ebola outbreak is bad and getting worse every day.

"I am very concerned about this virus mutating and spreading to more countries in Africa and around the world. This is a transnational security threat affecting economic and political security in these nations.

"I appreciate that we are having this hearing to learn about Ebola, to hear about the effects of this disease on the kids, women, and men as well as the health care systems in these countries, and to discuss the U.S. roadmap for immediate response to this human tragedy and global threat, but also for meeting long range public health needs.

"I want to thank the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) employees working 24/7 in Atlanta and in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nigeria, and Senegal. I also want to thank the missionaries, NGOs, vaccine makers, and doctors risking their lives to save lives.

"I also want to thank our military personnel who will lead the U.S. response and the 3,000 U.S. forces who will be dispatched in Western Africa under the President's new order. These individuals are risking their lives to save lives.

“Today, we are responding to three global crises: ISIS, Ukraine, and Ebola. The U.S. is an indispensable nation in responding to these three threats. We are more open and more transparent about what we know and don’t know.

“The U.S. is critical in the fight to stamp out Ebola. We must have a global response for this global health emergency and transnational security threat. The U.S. can do more and must do more if we are to stamp out this deadly disease and keep it from our doorsteps.

“Today, just eight months after this began, more than 2,000 individuals are dead and more than 4,000 have been infected in five countries. We know thousands more have suffered or died. We also know it only takes one sick person to infect dozens more.

“Last week, I met with Dr. Frieden and he told me the future of Africa is on the line, and the number of infected and dead is exploding. We talked about how Ebola has the potential to destabilize countries. The situation on the ground is bad and it will only get worse.

“We also know that the U.S. is essential in prevention and containment of this public health and national security threat.

“Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea do not have a strong health care system or basic infrastructure that we take for granted like running water, plentiful food, paved roads, cars, construction equipment and well-staffed health clinics and hospitals with nurses, doctors, and other health professionals.

“When a disease like Ebola sweeps through a country like wildfire, there is fear and mistrust. This sparks violence, halting trade and creating food shortages. International partners like the U.S. must step up to address the compelling human need in West Africa.

“That’s why the Appropriations Committees are working in a bipartisan and bicameral fashion – Chairs Rogers and myself and Ranking Members Shelby and Lowey as well as our fellow colleagues on these Committees – with the President to include \$88 million in the fiscal year 2015 Continuing Resolution.

“The \$88 million for the CDC and the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) enables the U.S. to provide logistical support and medical supplies to Liberia, including mobile laboratories, beds, and medical treatment facilities.

“It will also enable them to ramp up development of drugs like ZMapp and begin clinical trials on vaccines as well as send top-notch epidemiologists from the CDC to the five countries with Ebola to track this disease and slow its spread.

“But that extra \$88 million just meets the immediate need to tackle Ebola through the end of this year.

“I look forward to hearing from our federal witnesses.

“Dr. Beth Bell, director of the CDC’s National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infection Diseases, is helping lead the CDC’s response, which includes 300 personnel in Atlanta and West Africa. They are doing outreach and communication about what Ebola is and how to stop it from spreading, increasing health care capacity in these countries with beds, doctors, and medical supplies, and identifying individuals with Ebola and monitoring the people they came in contact with for symptoms of the illness.

“Dr. Robin Robinson, director of BARDA, is working with the private sector to ramp up manufacturing of vaccines and ZMapp for clinical studies of these products in humans and to bring these products to the marketplace.

“Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), is partnering with the Department of Defense and drug companies to do basic research on Ebola vaccines and post-exposure treatments.

“I’m also looking forward to hearing from our two witnesses who are serving on the front lines for non-governmental organizations to save and improve the lives of the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

“Dr. Kent Brantly, the former medical director of Samaritan’s Purse in Liberia, survived Ebola and was treated at Emory with the help of the CDC.

“Mr. Ishmael Alfred Charles is the program manager in Sierra Leone for the Healey International Relief Foundation and is helping to bring attention to this humanitarian crisis.

“Our witnesses today, federal employees government wide and our partners at non-governmental organizations and drug companies, are working hand in hand to save lives, to stop this disease from spreading, to restore security in the region, and to help make these countries’ health systems more resilient so that the next infectious disease outbreak doesn’t get out of control.

“I want to thank the health professionals who rush to the farthest corners of the globe to help contain this Ebola outbreak.”

###