

BACKGROUND

In Africa, people are dying unnecessarily because there are simply not enough health care workers. Health workers – nurses, doctors, pharmacists, community health workers, laboratory technicians, physician assistants, nurse assistants, mental health workers, and many more – are at the core of health systems everywhere. But in Africa, a mere three percent of the world's health workers struggle against all odds to combat 24 percent of the global disease burden. The World Health Organization estimates that sub-Saharan Africa is suffering a shortage of more than 800,000 doctors, nurses, and midwives, and an overall shortfall of nearly 1.5 million health workers. At present, sub-Saharan Africa has little over one million health workers, and fewer than 600,000 doctors, nurses, and midwives.



ACTION

Last year, Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) introduced the African Health Capacity Investment Act, urging the U.S. to take the lead in helping African countries establish a stable health infrastructure and end their health crises. The bill, soon to be reintroduced as the African Health Capacity Investment Act, offers an excellent model for the U.S. government to help countries in sub-Saharan Africa build the capacity and develop the human resource infrastructure to secure and maintain the health of their citizens.

One of our own senators, Sen. Russell Feingold, is one of the co-sponsors of the African Health Capacity Investment Act, please contact his office and thank him for his leadership.

Also consider contacting our other senator, Herb Kohl, urging him to support the African Health Capacity Investment Act.

To reach your senators, call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask to speak to your senator's office. Also find contact information at www.senate.gov.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information, please contact Maryknoll at:

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