

IDSA Zika Vote Statement

May 17, 2016

The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) is encouraged that the U.S. Senate is considering bipartisan legislation this week to provide emergency supplemental funding to address the Zika virus outbreak globally and domestically. We are disappointed that the U.S. House of Representatives intends to advance a package that would provide roughly half the funding in the bipartisan Senate bill and we are alarmed at the lack of foresight that would divert funding from other important public health and biomedical research priorities. U.S. territories and other countries in Central and South America need immediate assistance to address this ongoing crisis. The Zika threat to the continental United States is imminent with the approach of summer. State and local public health departments as well as biomedical researchers need robust resources now to protect our population from Zika and to develop vaccines, rapid diagnostics, and therapeutic agents. As infectious diseases physicians, IDSA members are on the front lines preparing for and responding to all outbreaks, and have seen firsthand the necessity of a strong public health infrastructure, biomedical research enterprise, and infectious diseases workforce to address all current and future threats. We urge Congress to pass the strongest emergency funding bill possible to combat Zika and to reject efforts to fund the Zika response at the expense of equally critical health funding.