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Congress of the United States
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October 3, 2014

The Honorable Rear Admiral Boris D. Lushniak, M.D.
Acting United States Surgeon General
Tower Building, Plaza Level 1, Room 100
1101 Wootton Parkway
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Rear Admiral Lushniak:

Earlier this week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced the first case of Ebola had been diagnosed in Dallas, Texas. As a lifelong Texan who represents a district neighboring Dallas, this development is of grave concern to my constituents and me.

Already, the U.S. State Department has issued travel warnings and advisories for the countries most affected by Ebola, and several African countries and airlines have implemented their own travel restrictions. And while the CDC has been screening travelers who fly out of those countries, the Dallas case proves that this is clearly not enough. A person can evade CDC detection and arrive in the United States if that individual is asymptomatic and intentionally lies about, or is unaware of, their exposure to Ebola.

While I understand an asymptomatic individual is not contagious, the person is contagious once they begin to show symptoms. As a result, the CDC is monitoring upwards of fifty individuals who may have contracted Ebola from the Dallas patient once he arrived in the United States.

The Dallas incident clearly shows that while the CDC can prevent infected individuals with Ebola symptoms from leaving these countries – screeners cannot identify all infected persons. Therefore, I am hereby requesting that you use the Surgeon General's authority granted under 42 U.S.C. §265 and prohibit individuals from these countries which have had cases of Ebola from entering the United States. Without a cure or a vaccine for Ebola – which has a fatality rate of nearly 50 percent - we must do all that we can to protect American citizens from this horrific disease.

Sincerely,



Sam Johnson
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Tom Frieden, M.D. – Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
The Honorable Michael P. Huerta – Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration