



End Tuberculosis Now Act of 2021 (S.3386)

The Problem: The COVID-19 pandemic is a serious reminder of the detrimental effects infectious disease can have on the global population. As the world enters the third year of the pandemic, there is increased concern about COVID-19's impact on current tuberculosis (TB) control programs and the ramifications COVID-19 has on people who have TB.

TB is a global disease, found in every country of the world and in approximately one quarter of the world's population. It is the second deadliest infectious disease (after COVID-19). Even though TB is a preventable, treatable and curable airborne infection, a devastating 1.5 million people died in 2020 from the disease. It is also the leading cause of death among people living with HIV/AIDS. Moreover, the failure to diagnose and treat TB exacerbates multi-drug resistant TB, which remains a public health crisis and a threat to health, safety and the global economy.

Without a renewed focus on ending TB, the global epidemic could erase decades of progress in worldwide efforts to end both TB and HIV/AIDS, much of which has been achieved through U.S. investment.

The Solution: The End Tuberculosis Now Act significantly refocuses U.S. actions on resources to diagnose, prevent and treat TB. More specifically, it addresses virulent drug-resistant strains of TB and provides support for the latest best practices and technologies in the areas of diagnosis and treatment. Specifically, the bill:

- **supports the objective of the World Health Organization END TB Strategy**, including goals to reduce TB deaths by 95%, to reduce the TB incidence rate by 90% and to reduce the number of families facing catastrophic health costs due to TB 100% by 2035;
- authorizes **increased assistance to the Stop TB Partnership** ensuring that innovative and new technologies close gaps in care cascades for active TB;
- **prioritizes building and strengthening TB programs** in coordination with domestic agencies and organizations to diagnose, treat and prevent TB with a focus on co-infected individuals with HIV or other comorbidities, and to reduce other barriers to care, such as stigma;
- **reduces the duplication of efforts** and encourages equitable shares in domestic and international expenditure.

Those living in extreme poverty have greater exposure to health threats and are less likely to have access to care when they fall sick, especially as COVID-19 impacts already fragile health systems. The overlap in poverty and TB means that addressing TB will not only prevent more lives from being lost, but also make a positive impact on global poverty reduction efforts.

Supporters: The End Tuberculosis Now Act was introduced on December 14, 2021 by Sens. Menendez (D-NJ) and Young (R-IN). A previous version of the bill was introduced in August of 2019 and had bipartisan support.