

CASTLE SUPPORTS BIPARTISAN GLOBAL HIV/AIDS INITIATIVE -- APRIL 2, 2008

Washington, DC -- Today, Congressman Michael Castle (R-DE) voted in favor of H.R. 5501, the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde U.S. Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis & Malaria Reauthorization Act, when it passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 308-116. This bill reflects a negotiated compromise between Congress and the White House to revise and expand the United States' global HIV/AIDS initiative in Africa. Specifically, this bill authorizes \$10 billion a year, for five years, in U.S. foreign aid to be used for combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. A similar version of this bill is awaiting action on the Senate floor.

"HIV and AIDS continue to be the leading causes of death in Sub-Saharan Africa and the fourth leading killer of persons worldwide," Rep. Castle said. "Currently, 33 million people are infected, and over 25 million have died of AIDS globally. Nearly 90% of the children affected with HIV reside in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a world leader, we have a responsibility provide deeply suffering nations with some of the basic methods to treat and prevent deadly diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and various forms of malaria.

"Furthermore, I supported Rep. Jeff Fortenberry's (R-NE) amendment to the bill which empowers an independent Inspector General to conduct regular audits to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent effectively and efficiently. By including both contractors and subcontractors under the jurisdiction of the special Inspector General, this provision is directly in line with my ongoing efforts to improve accountability and transparency regarding the actions of government contractors."

Rep. Castle has been supportive of international HIV/AIDS assistance organizations in Delaware including Safe Blood for Africa. While the legislation passed by the House today is targeted towards Sub-Saharan Africans, Rep. Castle is also a strong supporter of medical research and an advocate of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) which funds a majority of medical research, including the HIV/AIDS research, here in the United States.

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