

# Congresswoman Betty McCollum

*Serving Minnesota's 4th Congressional District*

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## **McCollum: Urgency Needed to Combat Ebola in West Africa**

**St. Paul, MN** – As the deadly Ebola epidemic continues to spread in the West African countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, devastating families and communities, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) today released new projections showing the potential for the epidemic to explode. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, the number of cases of Ebola could rise to as many as 1.4 million by January 2015 without immediate actions to contain the disease.

In an equally dire assessment, the International Crisis Group issued a statement today saying, “the hardest hit countries now face widespread chaos and, potentially, collapse. Adding social breakdown to the epidemic would create disaster perhaps impossible to manage.”

As co-chair of the Global Health Caucus and a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (DFL-MN) has been helping to lead the effort for increased U.S. resources to fight this health emergency. Working with Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA), McCollum successfully championed \$88 million of added resources to combat Ebola that was included in the fiscal year 2015 continuing resolution approved by Congress last week. Those funds will provide the CDC with additional on-the-ground resources in West Africa and also allocate funds for the testing of new treatments against Ebola.

In addition, Rep. McCollum strongly supports the Department of Defense’s requests to reprogram excess fiscal year 2014 funding to fight Ebola. The requests would make available \$1 billion in excess funds from the Overseas Contingency Operations for Afghanistan to support U.S. activities in West Africa.

In light of the U.S. response to Ebola and today’s new projections by the CDC, Congresswoman McCollum released the following statement:

“President Obama’s commitment to fighting the Ebola crisis in West Africa is critical to combating this killer disease. The CDC’s new projections paint a picture of true catastrophe unless the international community responds with real urgency. This is no longer a localized problem for affected countries, this is both a global health and national security threat that must be contained and extinguished. I strongly support the

Obama administration's active leadership to engage other nations to strengthen the international response to this Ebola crisis before it is too late."

*Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations Committee.  
She is Democratic Co-Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus.*

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