

**NEWS RELEASE**

# Judd Gregg

United States Senator for New Hampshire  
393 Russell Building, Washington, D.C. 202-224-3324 [www.senate.gov/~gregg/](http://www.senate.gov/~gregg/)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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*Contact: Erin Rath/Jeff Turcotte*

## **Senator Gregg Introduces Bio-Defense and Smallpox Compensation Legislation Today**

*Gregg Tapped to Lead the Administration's Bio-Defense Proposal Through the Senate*

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) today introduced comprehensive biodefense legislation designed to prepare and protect the nation from the threat of a bioterror attack. The legislation includes the "Bioshield" proposal President George W. Bush unveiled during his State of the Union Address in January. Gregg's legislation also includes the new administration supported smallpox vaccination compensation program.

Today Gregg introduced **S. 15, the Biodefense Improvement and Treatment for America Act**, after working in close consultation with the White House, Majority Leader Bill Frist and others to develop a comprehensive piece of legislation that protects Americans from biological, chemical, nuclear, or radiological weapons attack.

As Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Gregg expects to mark up the Biodefense Improvement and Treatment for America Act in the HELP committee later this month.

The bill includes three major components including the President's Bioshield proposal, the smallpox vaccination compensation plan, and improvements in the Vaccine Compensation Program making the program more responsive to children and families.

"Once upon a time, smallpox was a deadly disease. Now terrorists want to bring it back as a deadly weapon. Smallpox is just one example of the bioterror threat we need to be prepared to fight against. This bill will help us develop vaccines for deadly diseases like anthrax and botulism. It will help to ensure that we have stockpiles of these vaccines on hand and ready for use during a bio-terror attack. It will help us vaccinate first responders and others who will be on the front lines during an attack, and it gives our scientists the ability to work quickly to develop vaccines for any new bio-terror threats terrorists may be developing," said Senator Gregg.

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### **Major Components of S. 15-The Biodefense Improvement and Treatment for America Act: Biodefense:**

- Allows the government to buy improved vaccines, devices or drugs for smallpox, anthrax, and botulism toxin.

- Makes funds available to buy vaccines to protect against other dangerous pathogens, such as Ebola and plague, as soon as scientists verify these products are safe and effective.
- Strengthens NIH development of new drugs by speeding research and development on promising new discoveries.
- Gives the FDA the ability to make promising treatments available quickly in emergency situations.

**Small Pox Vaccine Compensation:**

- Creates a “no fault” system to compensate eligible persons injured by the small pox vaccine.
- Covers any health care workers and emergency responders who volunteer to receive the smallpox vaccine as well as any people who may contract small pox through secondary infection.
- Allows the federal government to reimburse individuals for the cost of medical treatment incurred because of the small pox vaccine.
- Allows the federal government to compensate individuals for lost wages beyond the first five days work missed because of the small pox vaccine.
- Allows the federal government to pay a \$262,000 lump sum award to the survivors should death or permanent or total disability occur.

**Vaccine Affordability:**

- Improves immunization rates by increasing the distribution of vaccines and streamlines the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program to better serve children and families impacted by vaccine-related injuries.

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