

## The Vaccine Access and Supply Act of 2005

Vaccines protect against devastating diseases and save hundreds of thousands of lives each year. Yet as last year's flu vaccine shortage illustrated, and numerous independent reports have confirmed, the U.S. vaccine supply is fragile.

Ten states and two cities do not ensure that all children have access to all routinely recommended vaccines, including life-saving shots against meningitis and sepsis. Half of all adults between the ages of 18 and 65 — representing 89 million Americans — have no insurance coverage for immunizations at all. The small and unstable U.S. vaccine market serves as a disincentive to vaccine production and medical progress.

The Vaccine Access and Supply Act of 2005 aims to strengthen vaccine supply by expanding access to lifesaving vaccines for children and adults.

This legislation:

- **Establishes a 'Vaccines for Adults' Program.** Modeled on the successful Vaccines for Children program, this initiative will provide access to recommended vaccines for uninsured and underinsured adults in public health clinics.
- **Strengthens the Supply of the Influenza Vaccine.** To prevent another vaccine shortage, the bill would encourage manufacturers to increase their production of the influenza vaccine by having the government share the risk of unsold vaccines.
- **Supports State Immunization Efforts.** The bill increases funding available for states to strengthen their vaccine outreach, tracking, and delivery.
- **Provides Mechanisms to Prevent Vaccine Shortages.** The bill requires companies leaving the vaccine market to provide advance warning to public health officials. It also requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide a plan to Congress to fill the pediatric vaccine stockpile.
- **Facilitates Emergency Response to Shortages.** The bill ensures that in the event of a vaccine shortage, public health officials can determine where available vaccines exist in their community and have plans to distribute vaccines.

The Vaccine Access and Supply Act of 2005 has been endorsed by the American Public Health Association. It has also been endorsed by Dr. Walter Orenstein, former Director of the National Immunization Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.