

## Dr. Burgess Weekly Video Address September 19, 2014 “Ebola”

---

Hello, this is your Congressman, Michael Burgess. We are facing an unprecedented threat to our global health system. Ebola, an infectious and deadly virus, is spreading rapidly among patients in Western Africa.

You’ve likely heard of this virus before, not because it was widespread, but because it is so deadly. Patients who become infected often die within weeks. There is no cure. And it is easily transmittable.

Despite the dreadful symptoms and deadly nature of the virus, Ebola, historically, was easily contained. Since it was first discovered in the early 1970s, only a few hundred people were infected. Each time there was an outbreak of a few people, it was controlled and stamped out.

But in the past few months, a major outbreak has infected and claimed the lives of thousands of people in Western Africa. The size and scope of this outbreak is the largest ever documented and is growing by the day. This week, President Obama spoke from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta describing his plan to send 3,000 troops to Liberia, which is ground zero for Ebola. Our military will be responsible for setting up hospitals, treating patients and training medical personnel.

This will be the largest international response in the history of the Centers for Disease Control. Many have argued that these measures are extreme. As a physician, I would argue they are not. The death toll is approaching 2500 and is climbing every day. The treatment centers in Africa are completely overwhelmed. People are dying in the streets. Their public health system is near total collapse.

This isn’t just Africa’s problem. If their economies break down, it becomes a global security threat and worldwide economic disaster.

On the positive side, we have the knowledge and ability to fight this disease. Indeed, the U.S. government has been researching this virus and treatment for more than 25 years. We are sending the best and the brightest to confront this deadly virus before it gets measurably worse.

This is not a political issue. The president’s response is the best we can do with what we have today. There is precedent for dealing with crises like these. We reacted successfully following the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. And we will be successful this time, too.

As always, I welcome your questions and comments on this issue. Thank you for taking the time to listen. May God bless you and your family, and as always, may God bless Texas.