

*Will Join Other Congressional Leaders, Government Officials To Discuss Proper Action*

**WASHINGTON, DC** —U.S. Congressman Mike Pence, the Chairman of the House Republican Conference, joined other leaders in Congress from both the Republican Conference and the House Democratic Caucus to discuss the recent swine flu outbreak with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and Rear Admiral Anne Schuchat, the Interim Deputy Director for Science and Public Health Program at the Centers for Disease Control.

**"The health and security of the American people is not a partisan issue, it is the primary issue here in Congress,"** Pence said.

**"I look forward to engaging in a timely and useful dialogue with my colleagues here in Congress and in the Administration to chart the best course forward. I am committed to ensuring that the federal government is doing all it can to put this health crisis to rest and prevent future loss of life."**

BACKGROUND:

- There are several dozen confirmed and suspected deaths from swine flu in Mexico. The first death on American soil was reported overnight—a 23-month-old child—and officials from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have warned that further deaths in the United States are possible.
- The virus strain is new; there is no vaccine for it, and large-scale vaccine production would take several months.
- U.S. officials have begun releasing supplies of Tamiflu and related drugs from the strategic stockpile in order to treat potential cases when they appear.
- Given the current spread of the disease, public health officials have downplayed the potential effectiveness of travel or other border restrictions on limiting the scope of the swine flu outbreak.
- The Administration has called its declaration of a public health emergency a precautionary and logistical move intended to facilitate the rapid deployment of supplies to respond to suspected cases; officials have urged caution, but not panic, in response to the outbreak.
- CDC and other officials have advised usual precautions to minimize the further spread of the disease: wash your hands, cover your mouth and hands when coughing or sneezing, discard

used tissues, and stay home from work or school when feeling ill.

- Despite the disease's name, consumption of properly prepared pork products does not present a threat to human health.