



## **Ebola: Obama's Latest Failure**

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On Wednesday, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) confirmed a second Dallas healthcare worker who cared for Thomas Eric Duncan, the first Ebola patient to die in the United States, has also been infected. Unfortunately, that person is reported to have traveled by air since the time of exposure.

President Obama's response to the West African Ebola epidemic is wholly ineffective, but that should surprise no one. It's the way the president has responded to every threat to [U.S. security](#). From missile defense and Iran's nuclear weapons program to Iraq and Syria, from Russian aggression to the rise of ISIS to securing the southern border and now Ebola, Obama consistently fails to protect the citizens of the United States. His administration is worse than incompetent. It is antagonistic to America's interests.

Once again, Obama's response puts national security and the well-being of the American people at risk. Failure to keep people infected with the Ebola virus out of the United States is unconscionable. An Ebola outbreak in the U.S. could threaten the lives of untold numbers of Americans. No one knows the extent of the threat, and that uncertainly calls for caution. The U.S. health care system could be quickly overwhelmed by cases of Ebola, and further stressed by people who fear they're infected but are really not.

President Obama has refused to suspend direct or indirect commercial flights from West Africa into the United States and has deployed thousands of members of the U.S. armed forces to the region, diverting scarce military resources to a non-military mission and placing large numbers of Americans at the epicenter of the Ebola outbreak. He has announced screening measures for passengers arriving at five U.S. airports accounting for 94% of persons arriving from West Africa. However, the screening processes outlined by the White House are inadequate.

Similarly, the exit procedures in place at West African airports are ineffective. Ebola has an incubation period of up to 21 days. During much of that time people infected with the virus are asymptomatic, as was Thomas Eric Duncan, the man who died in Dallas after arriving from Liberia and who reportedly lied on an exit questionnaire concerning potential exposure to Ebola. Passengers departing foreign locations or entering the U.S. may lie to customs officials for the sake of personal convenience or to get into the U.S. where their chance of surviving Ebola is likely better than in their home countries.

It is pure hubris to claim that the U.S. health care system is ready to deal with an Ebola crisis. That Obama and other government officials may believe that claim shows the outsized confidence in the federal government that characterizes many professional bureaucrats and politicians.

Until we know more about the Ebola crisis, President Obama should take the following steps to protect America:

1. Suspend commercial flights originating from or connecting from West Africa to the United States.
2. Allow only U.S. military aircraft or government chartered aircraft to transport U.S. citizens and supplies to and from West Africa.
3. Quarantine all U.S. civilian and military personnel returning from West Africa in the country of departure for at least three weeks prior to embarkation.
4. Deny landing rights to any aircraft bound for the United States carrying any passenger who has been in a West African country (including airport transit areas) within three weeks of boarding a U.S.-bound flight regardless of the country where the flight originates.
5. Limit the number of U.S. military personnel sent to West Africa to those already committed by the Obama Administration, and ensure all military personnel so deployed undergo rigorous training and receive the best protective equipment.
6. Secure the southern border and turn back all persons seeking illegal entry into the United States.
7. Closely monitor the northern border and coasts, including Alaska, Hawaii and U.S. Territories to prevent illegal entry via ground, marine or air transport.

These measures, and possibly others, are needed to ensure that an Ebola outbreak does not overwhelm the U.S. healthcare system, sow panic and disrupt the U.S. economy, including delivery of food, water and essential services. President Obama's willingness to implement such measures will reveal whether he intends to protect the people of the United States or continue the pattern of the past six years.

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