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KENNEDY FLU AMENDMENT TO SUPPLEMENTAL PASSES

Washington, D.C. – Today, in a vote of 53-46, Senator Edward M. Kennedy’s amendment providing a compensation fund for health professionals and first responders who will be the first to receive experimental flu vaccinations passed and was added to the supplemental.

Below is Senator Kennedy’s statement:

“Today's vote by the Senate is a show of support and respect for America's first responders, the courageous and highly trained men and women who protect us all in the case of emergencies.

In the event of a pandemic flu crisis, they deserve a clear commitment from the government that they and their families will be compensated if they’re taken ill by a vaccine while caring for others.

The passage of this obvious but essential amendment is a step in the right direction, but we are still far behind where we should be in planning for such a pandemic. Other nations have been implementing their plans for years, but the Bush Administration has only just announced its plan today. We’re far behind, and time is not on our side.”

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