



Readers Write (Nov. 3)

Funding priorities ... Sure, we spend money – but not with very good aim

October 31, 2014 - 6:37 PM

The Star Tribune reports that spending on the Minnesota campaigns for governor and the state House has topped \$22 million. The Center for Public Integrity reports that roughly \$998 million has been spent on television ads for state-level offices and Senate seats nationally.

To fight Ebola — which has claimed nearly 5,000 lives globally — Congress appropriated \$88 million; NBC and CNN report \$57.2 million raised by six charities. Ebola funds raised: \$145.2 million.

Pulmonary fibrosis (known as PF or IPF) — the disease that is killing me — takes 40,000 American lives a year, the same number as breast cancer. Over the last five years, spending on PF research by the National Institutes of Health has averaged \$32.6 million a year (0.11 percent of NIH's budget). Minnesota ranks 17th in PF mortality in the United States.

We must reorder the public's and our government's priorities. \$998 million for (senseless?) political campaign spending, \$145 million to fight Ebola and less than \$33 million (\$150 per pulmonary fibrosis fatality annually) to find a cure for PF, which is but 1 of 7,000 so-called rare diseases in the United States. There is a crisis in funding medical research in America. We all need to speak loudly to that clear and present danger.

Paul Fogelberg, Wayzata

Letter as submitted to the StarTribune

Campaign Cash, Ebola and Pulmonary Fibrosis

(footnotes provided for StarTribune editors only – i.e., not for publication)

The StarTribune reports spending on MN campaigns for Governor and the state House has topped \$22 Million¹. The Center for Public Integrity reports that roughly \$998 million has been spent on television ads for state-level offices and Senate seats nationally².

To fight Ebola – which has claimed 4,912 lives³ – Congress appropriated \$88 million; NBC & CNN report \$57.2 million raised by six charities^{4,5}. Ebola funds raised = \$145.2 million.

Pulmonary Fibrosis (aka PF or IPF) – a disease that is killing me – takes 40,000 American lives/year ... the same number as breast cancer. Over the last 5 years, spending on PF research by the National Institutes of Health has averaged \$32.6 million/year (0.11% of NIH's budget)⁶. Minnesota ranks 17th in PF mortality in the USA.⁷

We must reorder the publics' and our governments' priorities. \$998 million for (senseless?) political campaign spending; \$145 million to fight Ebola; and less than \$33 million (\$150 per pulmonary fibrosis fatality annually) to find a cure for PF ... which is but 1 of 7,000 so-called 'rare diseases' in the US. There is a crisis in funding medical research in the US. We all need to speak loudly to that clear and present danger to America. (200 words)

Paul Fogelberg, Wayzata MN

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Letter to the Editor footnotes:

1 StarTribune 10/29, Page 1

2 <http://www.publicintegrity.org/who-calls-shots/state-ad-wars-tracker>

3 CDC website 10/29/14

4 NBC 10/28 – web search

5 CNN Money 10/08 – web search

6 NIH research spending figures compiled by the Pulmonary Fibrosis Advocates (spread sheet attached)

7 Pulmonary Fibrosis mortality table attached

You too can – and should – submit your own letter/story to your local newspaper(s) to help the general public with its understanding of pulmonary fibrosis. And, consider that staff members for all Members of Congress read and tally such letters on a daily basis. Your effort will pay additional advocacy dividends! Please – be an active PF advocate!

Minneapolis Star Tribune letter submission guidelines

Minneapolis Star Tribune Letters to the Editor

October 2014

Letters to the editor are 200 words or less in length.

Commentary submissions should be no more than 700 words.

What makes a good commentary? Ten guiding questions:

1. Is the topic **relevant** to our readers?
2. Is the topic **timely**?
3. Will your commentary add a **fresh perspective** or merely rehash what has already been said?
4. Do you have **expertise or experience** in the topic area? (This adds to your credibility, but it's not mandatory; experts don't have a monopoly on insight.)
5. Is the writing **clear and efficient** and within our word limitation? (There's a limit to the amount of editing we can reasonably do.)
6. Is the commentary **engaging**?
7. Does the submission **offer a clear point of view**? Is it plausible?
8. Is the argument being presented **logically sound** in its construction and conclusions?
9. Does the commentary **avoid hyperbole and fallacious reasoning**? (No exaggerations, no red herrings, no ad hominem attacks.)
10. If outside material or data is being presented, is it appropriately sourced? Do any numbers cited add up correctly?

Letters or Commentary may be submitted on-line at

<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/115289839.html>

OR, send your submission via e-mail to: Opinion@startribune.com



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