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# Obama Wants \$1.8 Billion to Fight Zika

By **Samuel Lieberman**

President Barack Obama will ask Congress for an emergency \$1.8 billion to fight the Zika virus abroad and, one hopes, arrest its spread inside the U.S. "What we now know is that there appears to be some significant risk for pregnant women and women who are thinking about having a baby," Obama said in an interview on *CBS This Morning*. He was quick to add, however, that "there shouldn't be a panic on this."

The largest share of the funding (\$828 million) would go to the CDC. But \$250 million would be allocated for a one-year Medicaid expansion in Puerto Rico, where people have gotten directly sick; \$200 million would go to vaccine research; and \$210 million will be put into a new fund for newly confirmed cases. The rest of the money will help

other countries fight off the disease, which causes only mild symptoms in adults but is extremely dangerous to a fetus in utero.

There have been 50 confirmed cases of Zika in the U.S. since December, among Americans who've gone abroad. The newest STD to fear has also been declared a global emergency by the World Health Organization and has inspired some to call for an end to *Aedes* mosquitoes entirely. The U.S. Olympic Committee has told athletes that they should consider skipping the 2016 summer Games, which are in Rio de Janeiro, if they are concerned.