

# Issue Brief



## Pass the Arthritis Prevention, Control, and Cure Act in 2008 (S. 626/H.R. 1283)

### **46 million reasons, one opportunity to make a difference**

**46 million** Americans suffer from some form of arthritis. As the most common cause of disability and the third leading cause of work limitation in the U.S., arthritis has a significant impact on our nation's economy.

#### **The Facts:**

- Arthritis costs our country **\$128 billion** annually; **\$81 billion** in direct medical costs.
- **294,000 children** have a form of juvenile arthritis including juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, and scleroderma.
- By the year 2030, **67 million Americans or 25%** of the adult population will have arthritis.
- Nearly 19 million people with arthritis are forced to stop working within 10 years of diagnosis.
- Americans with rheumatoid arthritis die 5 to 10 years earlier than persons without arthritis.
- 9,500 Americans die due to arthritis in 2003.
- 2/3 of Americans diagnosed with arthritis are *under* the age of 65.

To help address this ever-growing public health problem, Congress introduced the *Arthritis Prevention, Control, and Cure Act* (S. 626/H.R. 1283). This landmark legislation will:

- ✓ Strengthen arthritis public health initiatives, allowing more people to be diagnosed early and avoid pain and permanent disability;
- ✓ Expand the reach of evidence based self-management activities such as weight control and physical activity, which have been proven to reduce pain and reduce health care expenditures;
- ✓ Ensure that limited federal funding for arthritis is used in the most strategic manner possible through the formation of a federal interagency coordinating committee; and
- ✓ Authorize a remedy to address the country's severe shortage of pediatric rheumatologists.

#### **Congressional Request:**

**The *Arthritis Prevention, Control, and Cure Act* has 205 bipartisan cosponsors in the House and 46 bipartisan cosponsors in the Senate, yet 46 million Americans are still waiting for Congressional attention. The Arthritis Foundation urges the leadership of the House Energy and Commerce and the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committees to act now on S. 626/H.R. 1283.**