Florida Declares Zika Virus State of Emergency

By ACSH Staff — February 6, 2016

The state of Florida has proactively declared a state of emergency due to fears of the Zika virus. After nine people in four counties - Miami-Dade, Hillsborough, Lee, and Santa Rosa Florida's governor, Rick Scott, said he wants the state to be on high alert.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is the primary vector of the Zika virus and though some activist residents had protested a science solution to this ecologically useless pest, most people are now asking what can be done. The same mosquito also spreads Dengue and a company makes a GMO of the species that halts the spread of the insect itself, but it had been protested in the past because Dengue was more of a problem for poor people in South American than for wealthy Florida elites. Now there is even talk of bringing back DDT, which the EPA recommends for countries with diseases like malaria and Dengue, but which has been the subject of a political ban since the early 1970s. The *Aedes albopictus* mosquito may also be a potential carriers, and it is in virtually all of the eastern and middle regions of the United States, and it became resistant to DDT in the past, but for the biggest vector-borne issue there may both chemical and biological solutions available right now.

Earlier this week, the World Health Organization declared the Zika virus to be a public health emergency of international concern, the fourth time the organization has made such a designation.

Dr. Gilbert Ross, senior director of medicine and public health at the American Council on Science and Health, told Raven Clabough at The New American[^1] that DDT remains the only hope of keeping the Zika virus in check, as it will likely take at least a decade to find a vaccine for the virus and that the mosquito as well as the disease will gain footholds in the U.S., as did the West Nile virus.