

Submission Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Priority: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_



# Ted Stevens

United States Senator for Alaska

Please Note:

- Fill out one request form for each request
- This form (and any attachments) can be returned via:

Fax - (202) 224-2354  
 Mail - The Honorable Ted Stevens  
 United States Senate  
 522 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

- Requests are due by February 15, 2008.

## FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT REQUEST FORM

Project Name: IMPROVING HEALTH CARE IN THE BALKANS USING TELEMEDICINE, ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Project Location: The Balkans /South Eastern Europe

Project Description (please attach additional pages as required):

The International Virtual e-Hospital Foundation (www.iveh.org) is proposing continuation of the project "Improving Health Care in the Balkans Using Telemedicine, Advanced Technologies and Cultural Exchange Programs as a Platform", project started in September 2006 and will continue until the 31 August 2008, in the Balkan countries and has the goal of establishing telemedicine and virtual education network and creating a human capacity ready to become leaders in the health care in the Balkans. This program will establish South Eastern European Telemedicine and Virtual Education Network in attempt to improve health care delivery in the region, and to make this region of the world part of global health and collaboration. This will be achieved over a two-year period through structured educational curriculums and exchange programs by inviting physicians, nurses, and technical professionals from Kosova, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia to the US and by sending US experts to the region for workshops, seminars and other cultural and educational activities. (See next two pages)

Related Appropriations Bill: eca/pe/c/eur-06-61

Amount of federal funding requested for FY09: \$ 3 Million

Total funding to complete this project: \$ 6 Million

Number of years to fund this project: Two

Matching funds from the State of Alaska: None

Matching funds from local and private entities:

Not available at this time

If this project was funded in prior appropriations bills (within the last five years), list each bill and the amount funded:

eca/pe/c/eur-06-61

Amount included in the President's FY09 Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount included in the State of Alaska FY09 Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Check this box if state funding was sought but not provided.

List legislation that authorizes this project:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Check all that apply:**

- A change in the current law is necessary in order to proceed with the project. (If so, attach language and a list of laws that need to be amended)
- Bill or report language is needed. (If so, attach requested language)

**SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL E-HOSPITAL (IVEH) IN THE BALKANS SUPPORTED BY SENATOR TED STEVENS ON THE PROJECT: IMPROVING HEALTH CARE IN THE BALKANS USING TELEMEDICINE, ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AS A PLATFORM 2006-2008**

The International Virtual e-Hospital (IVeH), a non-profit foundation based in Anchorage Alaska has been implementing a project in the Balkans called "Improving Health Care in the Balkans Using Telemedicine, Advanced Technologies and Cultural Exchange Programs as a Platform", funded by the Bureau of Education and Cultural Exchange Affairs of the State Department of the United States. The goal of the program is to create medical and technical leadership that will significantly enhance health care access and quality in the region. This program is creating a powerful International medical education network in the Balkans for further collaboration and regional development. As part of the activities of the grant (eca/pe/c/eur-06-61), the International Virtual e-Hospital Foundation (formerly the Kosova Foundation for Medical Development) is successfully implementing a Telemedicine program in the Balkans by creating a Telemedicine program for Kosovo with six regional Telemedicine centers, an educational network and an electronic library, thereby introducing Telemedicine and e-Health technologies in Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro.

The project started in September, 2006 and will continue until 31 August 2008. This multiple education and cultural exchange program is having significant impact in improving health care delivery in the Balkans, and is making this region of the world part of a global health network and collaboration. This highly structured educational curriculum and exchange program is being implemented collaboratively and brings physicians, nurses, and technical professionals from Kosova, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania to the USA for training, workshops, seminars and other cultural and educational activities. In addition, the IVEH with funds from the earmark (eca/pe/c/eur-06-61) has established the infrastructure for Telemedicine and a virtual medical education network, as well as an electronic library in all regional hospitals of Kosova and has introduced Telemedicine and e-Health to Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia. Advanced technologies such as Telemedicine communications and virtual education modalities using the internet are being applied to ensure sustainability of the long-term educational effects of the program. This way, this program is creating a powerful International medicine education network in the Balkans for further collaboration and development. The medical and technical leadership that is being created during these two years will provide a solid foundation for new changes in health care in the Balkans. This multi-institutional, multi-state, and multi-country program represents the massive educational undertakings that will have significant impact in health care for the Balkans. By creating new opportunities for partnerships of medical institutions from the region, with many renowned institutions in the USA, this program will become a true ambassador of our medical advances, cultural diversity, and advances in technology. In addition, it will help prevent brain drain of experts and intellectuals from these countries, while creating a new platform of collaborations in the Balkans. As a result of these efforts, this program has become highly visible in the Balkans, as well as in the International peer reviewed literature, and is brain praised by ranking officials from the Balkans countries as well as from the State Department public affairs office in Prishtina, the Republic of Kosovo.

The IVEH has trained 48 doctors, nurses, technical and administrative personnel from the Balkans, and in Alaska and Arizona. The IVEH has also successfully organized Telemedicine and e-Health seminars in Tirana, Albania in collaboration with the USAID/Albania, and Telemedicine & Advanced Technology Research Center (TATRC/MMRMC) in Fort Detrick, Maryland. The Second Intensive Balkan Telemedicine and e-Health Seminar was held at the Sheraton Hotel on October 21-23, 2007, in Tirana, Albania. This three-day intensive seminar on current practices and principles of Telemedicine and e-Health was praised by the Prime Minister of Albania, Dr. Berisha and has planted the concept of need for Telemedicine and e-Health in this country. Due to the enormous success of this project, and significant changes in the Balkans politics, and continuous involvement of the USA in the region, it is of outmost importance to continue with this project, and invest in the future of Telemedicine and its potential in this region and globally, paying attention in particular to creating projects that will be implemented through International collaboration.

The combination of establishing the infrastructure and creating human capacity with close partnership with experts in the USA has proven to be an excellent approach to a very successful medical diplomacy, and as such should continue.

**Please note that a full and detailed report has been delivered to the office of Senator Stevens in both his Anchorage, Alaska and Washington D.C. office.**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROJECT PROPOSAL**

**IMPROVING HEALTH CARE IN THE BALKANS USING TELEMEDICINE,  
ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AS A  
PLATFORM**

The International Virtual e-Hospital Foundation ([www.iveh.org](http://www.iveh.org)) is proposing continuation of the project "Improving Health Care in the Balkans Using Telemedicine, Advanced Technologies and Cultural Exchange Programs as a Platform", project started in September, 2006 and will continue until 31 August 2008, in the Balkan countries. This project has the goal of establishing Telemedicine and a virtual education network and creating a human capacity ready to become leaders in health care, in the Balkans. This program will establish South Eastern European Telemedicine and Virtual Education Network, in an attempt to improve health care delivery in the region, and to make this region of the world part of global health and collaboration. This will be achieved over a two-year period through structured educational curriculums and exchange programs by inviting physicians, nurses, and technical professionals from Kosova, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia to the USA, and by sending experts from the USA to the region for workshops, seminars and other cultural and educational activities. Advanced technologies such as Telemedicine communications and virtual education modalities using internet will be applied to ensure sustainability of the long-term educational effects of the program. When fully implemented, this program will create a powerful international medicine education network in South Eastern Europe for further collaboration and development that is both inter-regional and International, while the medical and technical leadership created during this project will provide a solid foundation for new changes in health care in the Balkans. This multi-institutional, multi-state, and multi-country program represents massive educational undertakings that will have significant impact in health care in the region, and will have a significant strategic importance for the USA. By creating new opportunities for partnerships of medical institutions from the region with many renowned institutions in the USA, this program will become a true ambassador of our medical advances, cultural diversity, and advances in technology. In addition, it will help prevent brain drain of experts and intellectuals from these countries, and provide the ability for integration into inter-regional and International activities using technological advances and virtual communications. The objectives of this project proposal are to: Establish the infrastructure for Telemedicine and the virtual education network in these countries, and the region and to train new professionals in the use, adoption and practice of Telemedicine and electronic libraries; and to train physicians, nurses and technical personnel to manage the electronic medical libraries and information technology and integrate them into current clinical practices; create a network of new leadership that will continue training newer generations of doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. The expected outcomes are: the establishment of a sustainable Telemedicine network in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia, Hercegovina, and Slovenia (Kosova and Croatia already have the Telemedicine network); and to train approximately 100

medical practitioners, students and health-care professionals from each of these countries in the use of Telemedicine and e-Health practices as well as the establishment and maintenance of electronic classrooms and libraries.