

TB patient not stopped from traveling

by UPI

ATLANTA - Legal barriers prevented Georgia health officials from keeping an Atlanta man diagnosed with tuberculosis from leaving the United States.

About 200 pages of e-mail messages released from the Fulton County, Ga., health department under the Georgia Open Records Act detail how county health officials attempted to stop Andrew Speaker, who was diagnosed with a drug-resistant strain of the disease, from traveling to Greece for his wedding and honeymoon in May, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported Wednesday.

Speaker claimed Fulton County health officials knew of his travel plans and never informed him that he would not be allowed to go. However, county officials say they strongly advised Speaker not to go and were seeking legal action to stop him when he left the country two days early.

Georgia state law allows for a patient to be kept in confinement but not until the patient is served with a written medical directive. County officials said a directive had been drawn up but Speaker left the country before it could be given to him.

Speaker's doctors say he wasn't likely to infect others with the disease.

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