

September 6, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Labor, Health and Human Services  
and Education Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Labor, Health and Human Services  
and Education Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

The undersigned 33 organizations urge you to provide **\$7.8 billion** for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and **\$7.48 billion** for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in the FY 2018 Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. We are concerned about the overall level of proposed budget reductions for public health programs in the FY 2018 House LHHS appropriations bill and strongly encourage you to provide sustained, increased, and predictable funding to build capacity for public health programs that work every day to protect, improve, and keep all Americans healthy.

State and territorial health agencies and county and local health departments are already facing many challenges in the current fiscal environment and will not be able to make up for further reductions in federal support for these organizations. Today, federal resources account for an average of nearly half of all state and territorial public health department funding. Therefore, budget cuts in federal public health programs will further erode state and local workforce levels through additional staffing reductions, and strain front-line governmental public health activities that every community relies upon and expects to keep them safe from continuous public health threats.

The mission of governmental public health is to conduct evidence-based programs and activities that promote wellness and prevent disease, injury, and premature death for all Americans. Public health works at the local, state, and national levels to ensure health and well-being for our entire population, rather than just healthcare for individuals that is provided through our medical healthcare system. To carry out this effort, the United States needs to strengthen our public health system at all levels to create the conditions that preserve health for diverse communities across the country that are impacted by their own individual challenges and threats, including addressing the underlying conditions that lead to deadly and costly chronic diseases, combating the devastation from opioids, reducing health disparities, and rapidly responding to emerging disease threats such as Zika and Ebola viruses that arrive from outside our borders. We also need to invest in the capacity of our federal agency partners to address these modern day threats by developing new science, tools, and approaches to make our combined efforts more efficient and effective.

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With the return of full sequestration next year and its potential impact on public health budgets, we strongly urge Congress to avoid making further reductions in these programs and work to replace the scheduled sequestration cuts through a package that is balanced in how such relief is applied to defense and non-defense programs.

We look forward to working with you to ensure \$7.8 billion for CDC and \$7.48 billion for HRSA funding levels are enacted into law this year. If you have any questions or require additional information please contact Carolyn Mullen the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) chief of government affairs & public relations at [cmullen@astho.org](mailto:cmullen@astho.org).

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Public Health Association  
American Thoracic Society  
Association of Immunization Managers  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of State & Territorial Dental Directors  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
ChangeLab Solutions  
Colorado School Medicaid Consortium  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
March of Dimes  
NAPHSIS  
NASTAD  
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors  
National Association of County & City Health Officials  
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors  
National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials

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National Coalition of STD Directors

National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association

National Network of Public Health Institutes

Physician Assistant Education Association

Prevent Blindness

Public Health Foundation

River Stone Health

Safe States Alliance

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Trust for America's Health