

September 20, 2023

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education, Labor &
Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor &
Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders and Ranking Member Cassidy:

As organizations committed to improving and protecting the health of all Americans, we write to express our serious concern regarding language in the Bipartisan Primary Care and Health Workforce Act that would cut \$980 million from the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Prevention Fund). This will put Americans at greater risk for illnesses, injuries, and preventable deaths. We ask you to reject any cuts to the Prevention Fund as you work to reauthorize health programs.

The nation can no longer afford to underfund public health. In addition to losing more than one million Americans to COVID-19, the pandemic will likely have cost the U.S. economy \$14 trillion.¹ The nation spends more than \$4.3 trillion annually on health, yet only about 4.4 percent of that total represents spending on public health and prevention.² Despite spending more than any other high-income nation on treating disease, the U.S. has substantially worse health outcomes, with life expectancy declining in recent years.³ Now is the time to invest in public health and prevention.

The Prevention Fund currently comprises more than 10 percent of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) entire annual operating budget. Cuts to the Prevention Fund will translate into funding shortfalls in programs that states have long relied upon to keep their residents healthy and safe. In its first 14 years (FY2010-23), the Prevention Fund has invested more than \$12.3 billion in resources to states, localities, and tribal and community organizations in support of critical prevention and public health programs. These investments include the 317 immunization program that enables prevention of outbreaks, epidemiologists and public health laboratory grants in every state and territory to detect and investigate outbreaks and prevent further infections, the Preventive Health and Health Services (Prevent) Block Grant that enables states and localities to address their most pressing health concerns, supporting cancer screenings, and other critically important programs. Across the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Economic Modelling

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disease prevention, and chronic disease self-management.

Funding prevention not only saves lives, but it also saves money. Vj g'Rtngxgpvkqp'Hwpf øu'Tips
from Former Smokers Campaign alone saved an estimated \$7.3 billion in smoking-related
healthcare costs from 2012 to 2018 and helped more than one million Americans quit smoking
for good. Public health funding has not kept up with the range of threats that public health must
address. For many of these conditions, we know what works, but public health does not have the
resources to address these growing health threats.

The Prevention Fund has already been cut by nearly \$13 billion from FY2013-2029. These cuts
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the entire Labor-HHS Appropriations bill. As the Committee works toward reauthorizing health
programs, we urge you to avoid cuts to the Prevention Fund and ensure that CDC and public
health programs across the country can carry out their mission of saving lives and improving
health.

Sincerely,

ADAP Advocacy

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association on Health and Disability

American College of Clinical Pharmacy

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Physicians

American College of Preventive Medicine

American College of Sports Medicine

American Heart Association

American Lung Association

American Public Health Association

American Society for Microbiology

American Society on Aging

American Statistical Association

Association for Prevention Teaching and Research

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of Immunization Managers

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Association of Pathology Chairs

Association of Public Health Laboratories

Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Big Cities Health Coalition
CAEAR Coalition
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of Elders (CARIE)
Children's Environmental Health Network
Christian Council of Delmarva
City-County Health District
Colorado Public Health Association
Community Access National Network
Connecticut Public Health Association
Cook County Department of Public Health
Dorchester County Health Department
Early Impact Virginia
Endocrine Society
Eta Sigma Gamma
Foundation for Healthy Generations
Futures Without Violence
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality
GO2 for Lung Cancer
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative, Inc
Health Promotion Consultants
Healthy Weight Partnership Inc.
HIV Medicine Association
HLN Consulting, LLC
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness
Immunize.org
Institute for Public Health Innovation
International WELL Building Institute
Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition
Kentucky Voices for Health
Kids and Car Safety
Lakeshore Foundation
Linn County Public Health
Maine Public Health Association
March of Dimes
Marked By Covid
MaryCatherine Jones Consulting, LLC
Mel Leaman Free Clinic
Mental Health America
Minnesota Public Health Association
NASTAD
National Alliance of Public Health Students and Alums

Washington State Public Health Association
Well-Being and Equity in the World
Wisconsin Public Health Association
YMCA of the USA

cc: The Honorable Charles Schumer, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Roger Marshall, Senate HELP Committee
The Honorable Patty Murray, Senate Appropriations Committee Chair