

February 5, 2024

Speaker Mike Johnson
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

As organizations improving and protecting the public's health, we write to oppose the proposed use of the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Prevention Fund) as an offset for H.R. 485, the Protecting Health Care for All Patients Act of 2023. The Manager's Amendment would cut \$1.19 billion from critical public health funding from Fiscal Years 2024-2029, a roughly 13 percent reduction over that time period. We urge you to reject any cuts to the Prevention Fund.

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

The Prevention Fund currently comprises more than 10 percent of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (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.⁴ These investments include the 317 immunization program that enables prevention of outbreaks, epidemiologists and public health laboratory grants in every state and U.S. 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 vitally important programs. Across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

¹ T Walmsley et al. Macroeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, *Economic Modelling*, Vol. 120, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econmod.2022.106147>.

² The Impact of Chronic Underfunding on America's Public Health System. Trust for America's Health, 2023. [TFAH-2023-PublicHealthFundingFINALc.pdf](https://www.tfah.org/prevention-and-public-health-fund-at-work/)

³ M Gunja et al. U.S. Health Care from a Global Perspective, 2022: Accelerating Spending, Worsening Outcomes. Commonwealth Fund, 2022. <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2023/jan/us-health-care-global-perspective-2022>

⁴ For more information about the Fund at Work in States, see: <https://www.tfah.org/prevention-and-public-health-fund-at-work/>

(HHS), the Prevention Fund supports programs such as suicide prevention, Alzheimer’s disease prevention, and chronic disease self-management.

Funding prevention not only saves lives, but it also saves money. The Prevention Fund’s 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.⁵ 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 do not just threaten CDC’s budget, but also the ability of Appropriators to maintain funding for the entire Labor-HHS Appropriations bill. We urge you to reject 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,

The 317 Coalition
Action on Smoking and Health
The African American Wellness Project
The AIDS Institute
Allergy & Asthma Network
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dental Education Association
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Federation of Teachers
American Geriatrics Society
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Muslim Health Professionals

⁵ Tips Impact and Results. In *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*.
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/about/impact/campaign-impact-results.html>

American Podiatric Medical Association
American Psychological Association Services
American Public Health Association
American Society for Clinical Pathology
American Society of Hematology
American Statistical Association
Arthritis Foundation
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
Association of Immunization Managers
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Autism Society of America
Big Cities Health Coalition
Breanna's Ride
Brown County Health Department
Bureau County Health Department
CAEAR Coalition
California Black Health Network
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
Carter County Health Center
Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of Elders (CARIE)
Champaign-Urbana Public Health District
The Children's Partnership
Choose Healthy Life
Coalition on Human Needs
Colorado Association of Local Public Health Officials
Cook County Department of Public Health
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Delaware Academy of Medicine
Dent County Health Center
Digestive Disease National Coalition
The District of Columbia Public Health Association
Dorchester County Health Department
East Side Health District
Endocrine Society
Fayette County Health Department
Fight Colorectal Cancer

For Future Lungs
Ford County Public Health Dept.
Foundation for Healthy Generations
Franklin-Williamson Bicity Health Department
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality
GO2 for Lung Cancer
Good Days
Great Plains Literacy Council
Hawaii Public Health Association
Health & Medicine Policy Research Group
Health by Design
Health Resources in Action
HealthyWomen
Henry County Health Department
Hereditary Angioedema Association
HIV Medicine Association
HLN Consulting, LLC
Hope Charities
Illinois Aging Together
Illinois Public Health Association
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness
Immunize.org
Indiana Public Health Association
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Inner Explorer
IntelliQuit
International WELL Building Institute
Jackson County (IL) Health Department
Jasper County Health Department
Kankakee County Health Department
Lakeshore Foundation
Lee County Health Department, Illinois
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Macoupin County Public Health Department
Maine Public Health Association
March of Dimes
Marion County Health Department
Marshall County Health Department
Massachusetts Health Officers Association
Massachusetts Public Health Association
Mel Leaman Free Clinic
Mental Health America

Mercer County Health Department
Michigan A
Minnesota Public Health Association
Missouri Public Health Association
NACBHDD - National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability
Directors
NASTAD
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Local Boards of Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Eczema Association
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases
National Healthy Start Association (NHSA)
National Hispanic Health Foundation
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Institute for Children's Health Quality
National LGBT Cancer Network
National Pancreas Foundation
NDSACCHO
Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors (NALHD)
Nevada Public Health Association
New Hampshire Public Health Association
New Haven Health Department
New York State Public Health Association
North American Quitline Consortium
North Carolian Public Health Association
Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials
Partners In Health
Peggy Lillis Foundation
Pennsylvania Public Health Association
Peoria City/County Health Department
Pima County Public Health Department
Prevent Blindness
Prevent Blindness Ohio
Prevent Blindness Wisconsin
Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation
Prevention Institute
Project Sleep
Protect Our Care
Public Health Foundation
Pulmonary Hypertension Association

Putnam County Health Department
Randolph County Health Department
Respiratory Health Association
RiverStone Health
Safe States Alliance
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
SAVE A GIRL, SAVE A WORLD
Schuyler County Health Department
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Public Health Education
Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco Inc
South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center
South Dakota Public Health Association (SDPHA)
Southern Nevada Health District
Southern Seven Health Department
Stark County Health Department
STChealth LLC
Task Force for Global Health
Tennessee Public Health Association
Vaccinate Your Family
Voices for Vaccines
Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials
Washington State Public Health Association
WE in the World
Whiteside County Health Department
Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards
Wisconsin Public Health Association

cc: Members of the House of Representatives