

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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>.

<sup>2</sup> 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/)

<sup>3</sup> 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>

<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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

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<sup>5</sup> 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