



## *The State of Public Health In West Virginia*

Years of cuts to vital public health programs and agencies on both the federal and state levels have taken their toll and further complicate our efforts to support ongoing disease and injury prevention activities and to ensure we are prepared for an infectious disease outbreak, or other public health emergency. The current Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill, which funds most federal public health programs, contains increased funding levels for many of these programs for the first time in recent years.

- West Virginia spent \$95 per capita on public health programs in 2006, drastically less than the national average of \$162 per capita.
- Since 1990, the rate of uninsured population increased by 32 percent in West Virginia.
- Since 2005 the immunization coverage for children 19 months to 35 months has decreased by 14% from 86.6% to 74.9% in 2006.
- West Virginia has one of the highest rates of obesity in the U.S., ranking 48th in prevalence of adult obesity. The state's rate of obesity increased from 27.6% in 2005 to 30.6% in 2006.

Sources: *America's Health Rankings, 2006 Edition: A Call to Action for People & Their Communities*; *Trust for America's Health The State of Your Health Report, 2006 Edition*; *The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts*.

In response to an informal electronic survey sent out to our membership and 53 state affiliates:

*A Public Health Worker told us "...education and awareness activities in regions where field staff are vacant have been greatly reduced - in one district by over half"*

*An employee at a district health department lamented, "The Municipal Health Services Program termination, as a CMS waiver program, impacts the elderly and disabled...The loss of our SAMHSA Family Works grant hurts African American pregnant females, by reducing access to AODA and mental health services"*

*Founded in 1872, APHA is the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. The association aims to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org).*