

Sample OP-ED on Public Health Funding

Congress is working to begin the effort to restore funding for many of the public health programs that have experienced significant cuts, lost purchasing power or both over the past 3 years. At a time when the nation's state and local health departments are already severely understaffed and being asked to do more to protect the lives of Americans, we must support these efforts and work to rebuild these important programs.

Over the past several years, funding for essential public health programs including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and many other critical public health programs has been level funded or cut - severely threatening the stability of our nation's public health services. Continued underfunding of these programs undermines the progress we have made and could leave our public health system unprepared in the event of a terror attack, infectious disease outbreak, or other public health emergency.

Public health services are responsible for a broad scope of research initiatives that lead to breakthroughs in biomedical, pharmaceutical, behavioral sciences, as well as health service and primary care delivery, among many other vitally important health-related issues. In addition, our public health system provides individuals and communities with essential preventative services such as nutrition education and promotion, family planning and maternal and child health services, immunizations, cancer and cardiovascular disease screening as well as services to promote health and prevent a host of chronic diseases. Public health services also work to protect us against new and emerging infectious diseases, global pandemics and other potential hazards to our health. Furthermore, they work to provide and secure an array of basic and specialized health care services for the distressingly growing numbers of uninsured individuals.

Existing and emerging threats to public health emphasize the need to restore funding for our nation's public health agencies and programs. To protect the health of Americans we must encourage Congress to restore this critical funding.

