

The mission of the American Public Health Association is to improve the health of the public and achieve equity in health status. To realize this mission, APHA will work with members of the 116th Congress and the administration to promote policies that protect and strengthen public health systems for all communities and populations.

**Increase and protect funding for vital public health agencies and programs.** We are pleased that Congress passed and the president signed the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill increasing important funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration and fully allocating the Prevention and Public Health Fund. We strongly urge Congress to build upon its FY 2020 investments in important health agencies and programs by working in a bipartisan manner to further increase funding in the FY 2021 appropriations process. APHA is joining with other public health partners to support the 22 by 22 campaign, an effort to increase funding for CDC by at least 22 percent by FY 2022 to support critical programs to combat infectious and chronic diseases, prevent substance misuse, protect the public from environmental threats and ensure our state and local health departments have the resources they need to respond to natural disasters and other public health emergencies.

**Uphold the Affordable Care Act and expand access to health coverage and services.** Millions of Americans are reaping the benefits of the ACA through expanded coverage, coverage of preventive benefits, a prohibition on discriminating against people with pre-existing conditions, an extension of dependent coverage for adult children up to age 26 and progress in closing the Medicare prescription drug coverage gap. APHA supports H.R. 987, the Strengthening Health Care and Lowering Prescription Drug Costs Act, and H.R. 986, the Protecting Americans with Preexisting Conditions Act. These bills, which passed the House, would improve health coverage for families, protect people with pre-existing conditions by reversing actions by the administration that fundamentally undermine the individual and small group health insurance markets, and make health care and services more affordable. We also strongly support the Prevention and Public Health Fund, a first of its kind mandatory fund for public health and prevention activities created by the ACA. Through CDC, the fund is providing critical resources to help states keep communities healthy and safe. We continue to oppose any effort to repeal or weaken the ACA or the prevention fund, including by redirecting funds away from their intended use. APHA will also monitor efforts to further expand health insurance to the millions of individuals who still lack coverage and access to critical health services.

**Address the health impacts of climate change.** Climate change and extreme weather events are threatening our health today, and, if left unchecked, will lead to increases in disease and death. Immediate action can and must be taken to slow climate change and prepare the public health system to protect our communities from the negative health impacts associated with climate change. Vulnerable populations — such as communities of color, the elderly, young children, the sick and the poor — bear the greatest burden of disease and death related to climate change. We urge Congress to ensure our federal, state and local health departments and agencies have the resources and tools they need to address these challenges by adequately funding CDC's Climate and Health Program and supporting other efforts to address the negative public health impacts of climate change, including the Climate Change Health Protection and Promotion Act (H.R. 1243/S. 523). This legislation would require the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a national strategic plan to address the health impacts of climate change and would

enhance forecasting and modeling, track environmental and disease data, and expand the science base to better understand the relationship between climate change and health outcomes. We also strongly support action to address climate change by cleaning up major sources of pollution and oppose any efforts to block or weaken existing regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Uphold critical public health laws and regulations.** We oppose any efforts in Congress to weaken or roll back important regulations and laws such as the Clean Air Act that protect the public's health, including legislation that would weaken the process for developing evidence-based public health regulations. Unfortunately, the administration is currently working to undermine or dismantle critical public health regulations including the Clean Power Plan, which would limit carbon and other dangerous air pollution from power plants, and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standard, which has successfully limited mercury and other toxic pollution from power plants. Other crucial public health rules and laws have come under attack by the administration and some in Congress, including laws and regulations that protect our water, ensure worker safety, provide our nation's children with healthier school meals and ensure access to the full range of reproductive health services.

**Address the nation's gun violence epidemic.** In 2017, more than 39,000 individuals died as a result of gun violence. We are extremely pleased that in FY 2020, Congress provided \$25 million to CDC and the National Institutes of Health for vital gun violence prevention research. A sound public health approach to address this epidemic begins with understanding the science behind the problem. Research is an essential function to achieve this understanding to make data-driven policy and programmatic decisions, and we must continue to provide these critical resources. We also call on the Senate to take up House-passed legislation to require universal background checks for all firearm purchases in the U.S. and for Congress to pass legislation that allows the removal of firearms from those deemed potentially harmful to themselves or others through the issuance of extreme risk protection orders.

For more information on APHA's advocacy priorities, visit: <https://www.apha.org/advocacy> or contact Don Hoppert at [donald.hoppert@apha.org](mailto:donald.hoppert@apha.org)



The American Public Health Association champions the health of all people and all communities. We strengthen the public health profession. We speak out for public health issues and policies backed by science. We are the only organization that combines a nearly 150-year perspective, a broad-based member community and the ability to influence federal policy to improve the public's health.

Learn more at [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org).

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