



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

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Testimony submitted for the record on May 24, 2019
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and
Related Agencies

APHA is a diverse community of public health professionals that champions the health of all people and communities. We are pleased to submit our request for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and for the Health Resources and Services Administration in FY 2020. We are extremely pleased with the nearly \$8.3 billion provided to CDC in the House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. This total includes a transfer of \$225 million from the HHS Nonrecurring Expenses Fund for one-time projects to improve CDC campus infrastructure. We urge the Senate to match the House funding level for CDC as you develop the Senate's FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We also urge you to support \$8.56 billion for the Health Resources and Services Administration in the bill.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: CDC provides the foundation for our state and local public health departments, supporting a trained workforce, laboratory capacity and public health education communications systems. It is notable that more than 70 percent of CDC's budget supports public health and prevention activities by state and local health organizations and agencies, national public health partners and academic institutions. We believe Congress should support CDC as an agency and urge the Senate to match the nearly \$8.3 billion provided for CDC in the House bill. We are grateful for the important increases provided for CDC programs in FY 2019 and urge Congress to build upon these investments to strengthen all of CDC's programs most of which remain woefully underfunded. We also urge your continued support for the Prevention and Public Health Fund which currently makes up approximately 10 percent of CDC's budget.

CDC serves as the command center for the nation's public health defense system against emerging and reemerging infectious diseases. From aiding in the surveillance, detection and prevention of the Zika virus to playing a lead role in the control of Ebola in West Africa and detecting and responding to cases in the U.S., to monitoring and investigating disease outbreaks in the U.S., to pandemic flu preparedness, to educating the public about the value and importance of vaccines, CDC is the nation's – and the world's – expert resource and response center, coordinating communications and action and serving as the laboratory reference center for identifying, testing and characterizing potential agents of biological, chemical and radiological terrorism, emerging infectious diseases and other public health emergencies. CDC oversees immunization programs for children, adolescents and adults, and is a global partner in the ongoing effort to eradicate polio worldwide. Childhood immunizations provide one of the best returns on investment of any public health program. For every dollar spent on childhood vaccines to prevent thirteen diseases, more than \$10 is saved in direct and indirect costs. Over the past 20 years, CDC estimates childhood immunizations have prevented 732,000 deaths and 322 million illnesses. Congress must support efforts to stop current vaccine-preventable disease

outbreaks and prevent more from occurring. We urge you to provide adequate funding for CDC's public health emergency preparedness and immunization programs.

In 2017, nearly 40,000 Americans lost their lives due to gun violence. Unfortunately, Congress has failed to provide any funding for research into this deadly epidemic, which has stymied progress on gun violence prevention research for the past 20 years. Congress can correct this by providing CDC with \$50 million in FY 2020 for gun violence prevention research. This funding is needed to allow CDC to conduct research into important issues including the best ways to prevent unintended firearm injuries and fatalities among women and children; the most effective methods to prevent firearm-related suicides; and the measures that can best prevent the next shooting at a school or public place. We are pleased that the House bill provides \$25 million to both CDC and the National Institutes of Health, for a total of \$50 million, to conduct this research.

CDC's National Center for Environmental Health works to control asthma, protect against threats associated with natural disasters and climate change, reduce and monitor exposure to lead and other environmental health hazards and ensure access to safe and clean water. We urge you to match the House level of \$243 million for NCEH in FY 2020, including a \$5 million increase for CDC's Climate and Health program. Climate change is happening now and is threatening our health in many ways including through the increased spread of vector-borne diseases, degraded air quality from ozone pollution and wildfire smoke, hotter temperatures and more extreme weather events. Increased funding will allow CDC to fund an additional 14 health departments to help them prepare for and respond to the health impacts of climate change in their communities. CDC will also be able to begin to evaluate the work of existing grantees to identify and share best practices with communities nationwide.

Programs under the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion address heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and tobacco use that are the leading causes of death and disability in the U.S. and are also among the most costly to our health system. CDC provides funding for state programs to prevent disease, conduct surveillance to collect data on disease prevalence, monitor intervention efforts and translate scientific findings into public health practice in our communities. We once again strongly oppose the administration's proposal to block grant and cut funding for many of these programs.

Health Resources and Services Administration: HRSA is the primary federal agency dedicated to improving health outcomes and achieving health equity. HRSA's 90-plus programs and more than 3,000 grantees support tens of millions of geographically isolated, economically or medically vulnerable people, in every U.S. state and territory, to achieve improved health outcomes by increasing access to quality health care and services; fostering a health care workforce able to address current and emerging needs; enhance population health and address health disparities through community partnerships; and promote transparency and accountability within the health care system. We are grateful for the increases provided for HRSA programs in FY 2019, however HRSA's discretionary budget authority remains nearly 20% below the FY 2010 level (adjusted for inflation). We recommend Congress build upon the important increases they provided for HRSA programs in FY 2019 and provide \$8.56 billion for HRSA's total discretionary budget authority in FY 2020.

HRSA programs and grantees are providing innovative and successful solutions to some of the nation's greatest health care challenges, including the rising maternal mortality rate, the severe shortage of health professionals, the high cost of health care and behavioral health issues related to substance use disorder, including opioid misuse. Additional funding will allow HRSA

to build upon these successes and pave the way for new achievements by supporting critical HRSA programs, including:

Primary Health Care that supports over 11,000 community health center sites in medically underserved communities across the U.S., providing access to high-quality preventive and primary care to more than 28 million people including over 8.4 million children and 350,000 veterans.

Health Workforce supports the health workforce across the entire training continuum and offers scholarship and loan repayment programs to ensure a well-prepared, well-distributed and diverse workforce that is ready to meet the current and evolving health care needs of the nation.

Maternal and Child Health supports initiatives that promote optimal health, reduce infant mortality, minimize disparities, prevent chronic conditions and improve access to quality health care for vulnerable women, infants and children; and serves more than 56 million people through the MCH block grant.

HIV/AIDS delivers a comprehensive and robust system of care to more than 550,000 individuals impacted by HIV/AIDS, improving health outcomes for people with HIV and reducing the chance of others becoming infected; and provides training for health professionals treating people with HIV/AIDS. HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program effectively engages clients in comprehensive care and treatment, including increasing access to HIV medication, which has resulted in 86% of clients achieving viral suppression, compared to just 59% of all people living with HIV nationwide.

Family Planning Title X services ensure access to comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services to more than 4 million people, thereby reducing unintended pregnancy rates, limiting transmission of sexually transmitted infections and increasing early detection of breast and cervical cancer.

Rural Health supports community and state-based solutions to improve efficiencies in delivering rural health services and expand access, including supporting activities that aim to increase access to opioid treatment in rural areas, leverage the use of health information technology and telehealth and advise on rural health policy issues.

In closing, we emphasize that the public health system requires stronger financial investments at every stage. This funding makes up less than one percent of federal spending. Cuts to public health and prevention programs will not balance our budget and will only lead to increased costs to our health care system. Prevention opportunities, screening programs, lifestyle and behavior changes and other population-based interventions are effective, and a stronger investment in these programs will enable us to meet the mounting health challenges we currently face and to become a healthier nation.

Thank you for considering our views on FY 2020 funding for these critical federal public health agencies and programs.