January 9, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Democratic Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the 333 undersigned organizations, we are writing to warn of the dire consequences of repealing the Prevention and Public Health Fund (the Prevention Fund), authorized under the Affordable Care Act. Repealing the Prevention Fund without a corresponding increase in the allocation for the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations bill would leave a funding gap for essential public health programs, and could also foretell deep cuts for other critical programs funded in the bill.

Today, more than 12 percent of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) budget is supplied through Prevention Fund investments. This includes core public health programs that provide essential funds to help states keep communities healthy and safe, such as the 317 immunization program, epidemiology and laboratory capacity grants, the entire Preventive Health and Health Services (Prevent) Block Grant program, cancer screenings, chronic disease prevention and other critically important programs. For example, the Prevent Block Grant provides all 50 states, the District of Columbia, two American Indian tribes, and eight U.S. territories with flexible funding to address their unique public health issues at the state and community level.

Despite the growing and geographically disparate burden of largely preventable diseases, health threats such as the opioid epidemic, and emerging infectious disease outbreaks such as the Zika virus, federal disease prevention and public health programs remain critically underfunded. Public health spending is still below pre-recession levels, having remained relatively flat for years. The CDC’s budget authority has actually decreased by 11.4 percent since FY 2010 adjusted for inflation, and the Prevention Fund has helped to make up the difference.

Discretionary programs, including public health, education, and job training programs funded through the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education (LHHS) appropriations spending bill have been cut dramatically and disproportionately in recent years as lawmakers have worked to reduce the deficit, even though experts across the political spectrum agree these programs are not
a driving factor behind our nation’s mid- and long term fiscal challenges. Eliminating the Prevention Fund would be disastrous to the CDC budget and programs, and to the LHHS bill as a whole, leaving a nearly $1 billion budget hole which would be impossible to fill under current discretionary spending caps.

Funding prevention not only saves lives but it saves money. A comprehensive study of evidence-based prevention programs found that every dollar invested yields $5.60 in savings. There are many provisions of the Affordable Care Act aimed at promoting health and prevention, but the Prevention Fund is particularly important – a dedicated investment in prevention and public health activities to counteract the much larger bill – $3.2 trillion and growing – we pay every year as a country to treat illness and disease.

We urge you to maintain funding made possible by the Prevention and Public Health Fund and safeguard funding for the CDC and other programs under the Labor-HHS-Education spending bill.

Sincerely,

Ability360
Academy of Geriatric physical therapy
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Action for Healthy Kids
Active Living By Design
Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research
ADAP Advocacy Association
Adult Congenital Heart Association
Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital
Advocates for Better Children's Diets
The AIDS Institute
AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta
AIDS United
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Dental Research
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Cardiology
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Council on Exercise
American Diabetes Association
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Medical Student Association
American Organization of Nurse Executives
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Hematology
American STD Association
American Thoracic Society
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Foundation
The Arc
Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest
Arizona Health Care Association
Arizona Health Care Association
Arizona Medical Association
The Arizona Partnership for Immunization  
The Arizona Partnership for Immunization  
Arizona Public Health Association  
Arizona Public Health Association  
Arizona Rural Health Association  
Arkansas Public Health Association  
Arkansas Public Health Association-Presi-  
President  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health  
Forum  
Association for Clinical and Translational  
Science  
Association for Prevention Teaching and  
Research  
Association for Professionals in Infection  
Control and Epidemiology  
Association of Accredited Public Health  
Programs  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Maternal & Child Health  
Programs  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Association of Reproductive Health  
Professionals  
Association of Schools and Programs of  
Public Health  
Association of State Public Health  
Nutritionists  
Association of University Centers on  
Disabilities  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Atrius Health  
Barnes ON THE MOVE Partnership  
Big Cities Health Coalition  
Boston Alliance for Community Health  
Boston Senior Home Care  
Boston University School of Public Health  
Boulder County Public Health  
Cambridge Health Alliance  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands  
Canyon Ranch Center for Prevention &  
Health Promotion  
Cedar County Public Health  
Center for Health and Learning  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Center in the Park  
Central Jersey Family Health Consortium  
Centralina Area Agency on Aging  
Cerro Gordo County Department of Public  
Health  
Chalk Talk Science Project  
ChangeLab Solutions  
Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition of  
Washington State  
Children and Adults with Attention Deficit  
Hyperactivity Disorder  
The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of  
America  
City-County Health District  
Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational  
Science  
Coalition for Health Funding  
Coalition for Healthy School Food  
Coconino County Public Health Services  
District  
College of Public Health and Human  
Sciences, Oregon State University  
Colorado Association of Local Public  
Health Officials  
Colorado Association of School Nurses  
Colorado Children's Immunization Coalition  
Colorado Public Health Association  
Commissioned Officers Association of the  
U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.  
Community Access National Network  
Community Clinic Consortium  
Connecticut Directors of Health Association  
Connecticut Public Health Association  
Cooley's Anemia Foundation  
Council for Diabetes Prevention  
Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware  
Public Health Association  
Delaware County Office for the Aging  
Denver Public Health  
Des Ahrens Lactation Consulting  
Digestive Disease National Coalition
Dignity Health
Directors of Health Promotion and Education
Diversified Resources Group
Doctors for America
Dorchester County Health Department
Duxbury Council on Aging
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
Early Impact Virginia
Ehrens Consulting
Elder Options
Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley, Inc.
Elder Services of Worcester Area, Inc.
Emory University
Endocrine Society
Enhance Asian Community on Health
Evidence-Based Leadership Council
Fairhill Partners
The Family Van
First in Families of North Carolina
The Food Trust
Foundation for Healthy Generations
Fund for Public Health in New York City
Futures Without Violence
Gallatin City-County Health Department
GBS|CIDP Foundation International
Global Liver Institute
Greater Holyoke YMCA
Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City
Health Connect of South Dakota
Health Resources in Action
Healthcare Ready
Healthy Communities Coalition
Healthy Living Cape Cod
Healthy Schools Campaign
Healthy Teen Network
Hemophilia Council of California
Hemophilia Foundation of Southern California
Hepatitis Foundation International
Heritage Health and Housing
Hispanic Health Initiatives, Inc.
HIV Medicine Association
Home Care Alliance of MA
Idaho Public Health Association
Illinois Public Health Institute
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Institute of Social Medicine & Community Health
Intermountain Public Health Consulting, LLC
International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners
International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium
International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders
Interstitial Cystitis Foundation
Iowa Public Health Association
Jefferson County Public Health
Jeffrey Modell Foundation
Johns Hopkins University Institute for Health and Productivity Studies
Joy-Southfield Community Development Corp
Kalusugan Community Services
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition
Kentucky Voices for Health
Kossuth County Public Health
La Alianza Hispana
Lakeshore Foundation
The Latino Health Insurance Program, Inc.
Latino Public Health Network at Hopkins
Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department
Levine Senior Center
Local Public Health Association of Minnesota
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Louisiana Public Health Association
Lung Cancer Alliance
Maine Public Health Association
MaineHealth
March of Dimes
Winnebago County Board of Health
Wisconsin Public Health Association
Within Reach
Wolfson Wellness
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for
Women with Heart Disease
Youngstown State University