Talking points opposing cuts to public health funding

- Reducing the federal deficit and balancing the budget is an important public policy goal. However, drastically cutting public health funding at agencies including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Health Resources and Services Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency will do more harm than good.

- These agencies are our first line of defense against threats to our nation’s public health system.

- Past cuts in public health funding have already required that our public health agencies to do more with less and struggle to provide basic health and prevention services.

- The proposed cuts will seriously jeopardize public health agencies’ ability to ensure that the food we eat, the water we drink, the drugs we take, and the air we breathe is safe; and that we are prepared and protected in the event of a pandemic or other health emergency.

- These proposed cuts would drastically impact local communities across the country by compromising their ability to appropriately respond to public health emergencies, eliminating public health jobs, and seriously threatening continued efforts to ensure the health and well-being of all Americans.

- Proposed cuts to CDC immunization programs would result in cuts in state and local immunization workforce.

- Cuts in funding to the CDC would harm efforts to reduce healthcare-associated infections (HIAs) that patients acquire during the course of receiving healthcare treatment for other conditions. In 2002 an estimated 98,000 deaths were associated with HIAs contracted in hospitals.

- Cuts to public health funding would be detrimental to community health centers and the populations they serve across the country. The proposed cuts would close 127 newly opened community health centers across the country.

- The proposed funding reductions would leave 11 million patients without access to health care services next year – including pregnant women, individuals with life-threatening diseases, and children. With no access to primary care services, many of these individuals will turn to emergency rooms, drastically increasing costs for the entire health care system.

- Proposals to use the Prevention and Public Health Fund to backfill cuts to core public health programs are also deeply troubling. This funding is intended to supplement the work of community-based health promotion programs and preventive health services to reduce chronic disease rates, not to supplant proposed cuts to existing programs.