

September 7, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services
and Education Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services
and Education Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human
and Education Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. House
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services
and Education Appropriations Subcommittee
U.S. House
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Blunt and Cole and Ranking Members Murray and DeLauro:

The undersigned governmental public health organizations urge you to provide **\$8.4 billion**—an increase of \$440 million in discretionary funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—in the FY19 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (LHHS) appropriations bill. This is critical to achieve our goal of increasing funding 22 percent by FY22 to provide CDC with a predictable, sustained, and increased funding pattern needed to address several critical public health priorities. We also urge you to support **\$8.56 billion** for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in this legislation. In addition to these topline allocations, we strongly urge Congress to prioritize funding for public health programs included in the attached FY19 Governmental Public Health Appropriations Book. This book compiles top federal funding priorities and recommendations for nonprofit public health associations in FY19. In addition to the priorities in the FY19 Governmental Public Health Appropriations Book, we strongly urge you to support the following:

- \$325 million for the infectious disease rapid response reserve fund to enable public health surge activities to address emerging infectious disease threats at the onset
- A \$40 million increase for CDC, as well as state, territorial, local, and tribal health departments to address the opioid epidemic
- Additional resources to address maternal mortality and emerging threats to mothers and babies

Faced with limited resources, as well as evolving and emerging health threats, state and territorial public health agencies must balance competing demands for investments in health while ensuring that federal dollars are directed toward public health priorities within their jurisdictions. On average, state and territorial public health agencies rely on federal support for 48 percent of program revenue. Therefore, budget cuts or level funding in federal public health programs will further erode state and local workforce levels through additional staffing reductions, straining the frontline governmental public health activities that every community relies on to keep them safe from public health threats.

The mission of governmental public health is to conduct evidence-based programs and activities that promote wellness and prevent disease, injury, and premature death for all Americans. Public health works at the local, state, and national levels to ensure health and well-being for our entire population. To carry out this effort, the United States needs to strengthen the public health system at all levels to

create conditions that preserve health for the diverse communities across the country that are impacted by their own unique challenges and threats. This includes addressing underlying conditions that lead to deadly and costly chronic diseases, combating the devastation from the opioid epidemic, reducing health disparities, and rapidly responding to emerging disease threats such as Zika and Ebola viruses that arrive from outside our borders. We must also invest in the capacity of our federal agency partners to address these modern-day threats by developing new science, tools, and approaches to make our combined efforts more efficient and effective.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that the highest funding levels possible are enacted into law this year. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Carolyn Mullen (cmullen@astho.org), chief of government affairs and public relations at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials.

Sincerely,

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of Immunization Managers
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Public Health Nurses
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors
National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials
National Coalition of STD Directors
Safe States Alliance