



May 24, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
 Chairman
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
 Services, Education, and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations
 United States Senate
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
 Ranking Member
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
 Services, Education, and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations
 United States Senate
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As your Subcommittee moves forward with the FY 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations bill, we urge you to allocate at least \$216.5 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Office on Smoking and Health (OSH). The work that OSH does is critical to ending the tobacco epidemic that takes far too many lives and exacts an enormous financial toll on the nation’s economy.

While we have made great strides in reducing tobacco use, there is still more work to be done. Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. Every year, it kills more than 480,000 Americans and is responsible for an estimated \$170 billion in health care costs. More than 60 percent of these health care costs are paid by government programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.

OSH plays a critical role in reducing the death and disease caused by tobacco by funding activities that help to prevent youth from starting to use tobacco and help adult tobacco users to quit. For example,

OSH funds the highly successful national media campaign Tips from Former Smokers. This media campaign has motivated about five million smokers to make a quit attempt, helped approximately 500,000 smokers to successfully quit, and saved at least 50,000 people from premature death since its inception in 2012. The campaign is highly cost-effective with a cost of just \$393 per year of life saved, far below the \$50,000 that is an accepted benchmark for cost-effective public health programs.

OSH also provides funding to states for quitlines, which provide telephone-based counseling to help tobacco users to quit and, in some states, provide tobacco cessation medications. Smokers who use quitlines are at least two to three times more likely to succeed in quitting compared to those who try to quit on their own. OSH provides funding and technical assistance to health departments in all states to help maintain and enhance tobacco prevention and cessation programs at the state and community level. OSH also conducts critical research about the prevalence of tobacco use and alerts policy makers about trends in tobacco use such as the dramatic increase in e-cigarette use among adolescents in recent years.

We oppose the FY 2019 President's budget request to eliminate OSH. It would eliminate the Tips media campaign, eliminate dedicated funding for state quitlines and state tobacco control programs, and eliminate or seriously weaken CDC's ability to collect data on tobacco use and identify emerging threats. While the President's budget request says states could use funding from a newly created America's Health Block Grant to reduce tobacco use, there is no guarantee that states would do so, and states would almost certainly have to substantially cut back existing tobacco programs. Even with a \$500 million America's Health Block Grant, the President's budget request would reduce overall funding for CDC's chronic disease prevention programs by \$138 million, a nearly 13 percent cut.

We appreciate that the Subcommittee rejected the President's block grant proposal last year and has not supported the cuts to OSH funding in the House LHHS bill. Investing in effective tobacco prevention and cessation programs will save lives and reduce health costs from treating tobacco-related diseases. As you develop appropriations legislation for FY 2019, we respectfully request that CDC's Office on Smoking and Health receive at least \$216.5 million, which would restore funding to its FY 2015 enacted level, so it can continue its important tobacco prevention and cessation work.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry
 Action on Smoking and Health
 Allergy & Asthma Network
 American Academy of Family Physicians
 American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
 American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery
 American Academy of Pediatrics
 American Association for Cancer Research
 American Association for Dental Research
 American Association for Respiratory Care
 American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
 American College of Cardiology
 American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
 American College of Physicians
 American College of Preventive Medicine
 American Dental Association
 American Dental Education Association
 American Heart Association
 American Lung Association
 American Psychological Association
 American Public Health Association
 American School Health Association
 American Society of Addiction Medicine
 American Society of Clinical Oncology
 American Thoracic Society
 Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights
 Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership
 Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
 Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
 Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
 Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
 Big Cities Health Coalition
 Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
 ClearWay MinnesotaSM
 Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
 Eta Sigma Gamma - National Health Education Honorary
 International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer
 Lung Cancer Alliance
 March of Dimes
 National African American Tobacco Prevention Network
 National Association of County and City Health Officials
 National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
 National Association of School Nurses
 National Association of Social Workers
 National Hispanic Medical Association
 Oncology Nursing Society
 Prevention Institute
 Public Health Solutions
 Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
 Society for Public Health Education
 Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco
 Students Against Destructive Decisions
 The Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
 The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
 Trust for America’s Health
 United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society