



October 3, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
House Energy & Commerce Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
House Energy & Commerce Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Pallone:

On behalf of the Public Health Institute (PHI) -- a nonprofit dedicated to promoting health, well-being and quality of life for people across the nation and around the world -- I write in strong opposition to any proposal that would repeal, cut or divert current or future allocations of the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Prevention Fund). Although PHI is fully supportive of extending funding for Community Health Centers, the National Health Service Corps and other health programs in the CHAMPION Act, we are opposed to using the Prevention Fund as an offset, an effort that undermines our economic and national security.

Across the United States, neighborhoods and communities are relying on the Prevention Fund to help turn the tide on the costly epidemic of chronic disease, halt the spread of infections and epidemics, and invest in community resources that support health equity. A cut to the Prevention Fund, which is now 12 percent of the base budget for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, would increase preventable suffering and death, make the poorest and sickest communities fall further behind, and leave our country far less prepared for and capable of responding to public health emergencies.

The CHAMPION Act would cut the Prevention Fund by almost 60 percent, dismantling the capacity of public health to do its work. The pain will be felt in every state, every congressional district, and every neighborhood. Chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, asthma, and obesity are responsible for seven out of 10 deaths in the United States and cost \$1.3 trillion in treatment costs and lost productivity. While costs associated with treating preventable chronic diseases are estimated to increase by between \$48 billion and \$68 billion annually by 2030, every dollar invested in evidence-based prevention programs yields \$5.60 in savings. Furthermore, the cost of treating infectious diseases is over \$120 billion annually. The Prevention Fund is one of the best and most comprehensive tools we have available to stem our growing chronic disease rates and skyrocketing healthcare costs.

PHI knows firsthand that evidence and community-based prevention efforts work. In California neighborhoods and communities, Prevention Fund support for vital disease prevention programs has enabled over 8,000 residents of multi-unit housing to keep

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second hand smoke out of their apartments through the implementation of smoke-free policies; helped nearly 50,000 children walk and bike to school safely – thanks to Safe Routes to School strategies at nearly 100 schools; and helped over 100,000 people live healthier lives by supporting 252 new Chronic Disease Self-Management Program Leaders.

Like all good investments, access to prevention pays off in the end. Our nation cannot afford to turn its back on this investment now. PHI strongly urges you to oppose any efforts that would cut, redirect, or repeal the Prevention Fund.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nora Connors", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nora Connors

Deputy Director, Public Policy & Partnerships