



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 Minnesota<sup>SM</sup>  
 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