

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 6, 2017

Dear Colleague:

Last month, Senate Republicans released a discussion draft of their TrumpCare bill. Among its many cruel and heartless provisions, the bill would immediately eliminate the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Prevention Fund) created under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The Prevention Fund makes critical investments in prevention and public health efforts across the country.

Elimination of the Fund will cripple chronic disease prevention efforts and leave millions of families vulnerable to pandemics, food-borne outbreaks, and other health related emergencies.<sup>1</sup> These cuts amount to \$5.3 billion in badly needed public health funding over the next five years, approximately \$3 billion of which is a direct cut to states. Repeal of the Prevention Fund would leave a nearly \$900 million gap in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) annual funding, rendering the agency unable to provide states with needed support.<sup>2</sup> Paired with the President's proposed FY 2018 budget, TrumpCare would result in \$2 billion in cuts for the CDC, leaving the CDC at a level of funding not seen since FY 2001, even before accounting for inflation.

## **We urge you to review the attached fact sheet showing the impact of the Prevention Fund in your state.**

Eliminating the Prevention Fund will undermine critical work across the country:

- **The Prevention Fund offers money to states and territories to address their most pressing local issues.** The Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant provides all 50 states, Washington, D.C., two American Indian tribes, and eight U.S. territories with funding they can tailor to their unique public health needs.<sup>3</sup> Grantees have used the funding to monitor and prevent healthcare associated infections and infectious disease outbreaks; train emergency medical service providers; collect vital statistics, provide fluoride for local water systems; and much more.<sup>4</sup> Repealing the Fund would remove millions of dollars from state and local prevention work; the PHHS Block Grant has provided \$160 million each year since FY 2014 for these critical activities.<sup>5</sup>
- **The Prevention Fund assists states in their responses to the opioid epidemic.** A number of states have used funding provided by the PHHS Block Grant to support prescription drug monitoring programs, establish drug disposal guidelines,

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/toolstemplates/entertainment/tips/preventivehealth.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://tfah.org/reports/prevention-fund-state-facts-2017/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/funding/documents/cdc-pphf-funding-impact.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant/faqs.htm>, <http://www.astho.org/Federal-Government-Relations/ASTHO-Prevent-Block-Grant-Flyer/>

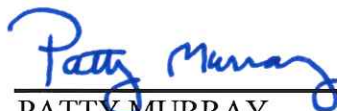
<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/funding/documents/cdc-pphf-funding-impact.pdf>

implementation prevention and education efforts, and hire and train staff.<sup>6</sup> Eliminating this funding will hamper their opioid response efforts.

- **The Prevention Fund enhances preparedness for public health emergencies.** The Fund provides support for states to strengthen their ability to detect and respond to recent outbreaks, including Zika virus, influenza, foodborne illness, and fungal meningitis.<sup>7</sup> President Trump's FY 2018 budget proposed shifting all of CDC's antibiotic resistance dollars to the Prevention Fund, so repealing the Fund through TrumpCare threatens to eliminate all of CDC's antibiotic resistance work.
- **The Prevention Fund provides children access to immunizations.** The Fund supports immunization through Section 317 grants, which help states ensure access to vaccines.<sup>8</sup> Over the lifetime of children born between 1994 and 2013, vaccinations are estimated to have prevented 322 million illnesses, 21 million hospitalizations, and 732,000 deaths saving approximately \$1.38 trillion in total societal costs.<sup>9</sup> Eliminating this critical immunization funding could increase the rates of illness and hospitalization, especially among children.
- **The Prevention Fund provides investments to prevent chronic disease.** The Prevention Fund invests in key efforts targeted at preventing chronic disease, including reducing tobacco use, increasing physical activity, and improving access to good nutrition.<sup>10</sup> It also invests in activities targeting our nation's most burdensome diseases; in FY 17 the Prevention Fund supported \$72 million diabetes prevention efforts.<sup>11</sup>

Eliminating the Prevention Fund not only puts all families at risk, but raises health care costs, hurts our economy, and burdens our state governments. Our country simply cannot afford to eliminate these efforts, and we urge you to consider the impact repeal will have on your state.

Sincerely,



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PATTY MURRAY  
United States Senator



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RICHARD J. DURBIN  
United States Senator

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.healthy.ohio.gov/phhsbg/~media/F9463BA8DEAA47BEB1C1EA19AB4921C.pdf>;

<https://www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant/states/pdfs/arkansas2015.pdf>;

<https://www.ok.gov/health2/documents/PHHSBG%20Success%20Story.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/funding/documents/cdc-pphf-funding-impact.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/guides-pubs/qa-317-funds.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6316a4.htm>

<sup>10</sup> <http://healthyamericans.org/health-issues/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Prevention-Fund-Backgrounder.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/open/prevention/index.html>





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