



American Academy of Pediatrics
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National Center for
Healthy Housing



April 4, 2016

Dear Senator/ Representative:

Our organizations write to thank you for the \$1.47 million increase in funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Asthma Control Program in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 omnibus and to ask for your strong support for the National Asthma Control Program again in Fiscal Year 2017. **Specifically, we ask that you support funding for CDC's National Asthma Control Program at \$30.596 million for FY 2017.**

The increase in FY 2016 will mean two or three additional states will have the opportunity to compete for funding for resources to help combat asthma. However, because of previous cuts to the National Asthma Control Program in recent years, now only 23 states receive funding from the National Asthma Control Program – down from 34 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico previously. This comes at a time when asthma continues to plague the public health of the United States. Our request of \$30.596 million – an increase of \$1.5 million over

FY16 levels – for FY17 would result in two-three more states being funded – bringing the total states funded to 27-29.

Asthma remains a serious and costly health issue in our nation. It is estimated that 25 million Americans have asthma, of whom 7 million are children, representing 10 percent of our nation's youth. Asthma is the third leading cause of hospitalizations for children under the age of 15 and is a leading cause of school absences due to a chronic disease. It is responsible for \$50.1 billion annually in healthcare costs, 10.5 million missed school days; and 14.2 million missed days of work and costs \$5.9 billion in lost productivity. While the number of people living with asthma has increased, research shows that people with asthma are better managing their disease. The number of people having asthma attacks decreased by 1.2 million from 2002 to 2010 and there were over 300,000 fewer hospitalizations due to asthma from 2003 to 2010. While asthma still claims the lives of 3,400 Americans each year, death rates have decreased 38 percent since the National Asthma Control Program's inception in 1999.

Asthma is a complex, multifactorial disease that requires a comprehensive approach. Public health programs that reduce the burden of asthma must include surveillance, environmental measures to reduce exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollutants, awareness and self-management education and appropriate healthcare services. While our organizations recognize these difficult financial times, we also know that when it comes to asthma management, an investment made today will save money tomorrow.

In 2015, CDC launched its 6|18 Initiative and identified asthma as one of the six priority areas where there is a significant opportunity to improve health outcomes for patients while reducing costs. The Initiative seeks to align evidence-based preventive practices with emerging value-based payment and delivery models to offer proven interventions that prevent chronic and infectious diseases by increasing their coverage, access, utilization and quality. Proposed interventions for asthma care include the promotion of evidence-based asthma medical management; strategies to improve access and adherence to asthma medications and devices; and, to expand access to both intensive self-management education and home visits that improve reduction of home asthma triggers for individuals whose asthma is not well-controlled with guidelines-based medical management alone. Increased funding for the CDC's National Asthma Control Program in FY17 will ensure more states can benefit from this initiative.

We thank you again for your support in FY16 and ask for your leadership in ensuring that CDC's National Asthma Control Program remains a robust program by **supporting funding in FY17 of at least \$30.596 million.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

American Lung Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Respiratory Care
American Public Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Association of Asthma Educators
Asthma Regional Council of New England
First Focus Campaign for Children
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Health Resources in Action
Healthy Schools Network
National Center for Healthy Housing
Regional Asthma Management & Prevention (RAMP)
Trust for America's Health