

February 28, 2020

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Chairman Blunt and Ranking Members Cole and Murray:

The undersigned public health, environmental health and other supporting organizations write to you to express our support for increased funding for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Environmental Health in the FY 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We thank you for the important increased funding provided to NCEH in FY 2020 and we urge you to build upon this increase as you work to develop the FY 2021 bill.

As Congress moves forward with the appropriations process for FY 2021, we urge you to provide at least **\$243 million** to NCEH to ensure all of its programs are adequately funded. This funding will help ensure that NCEH can work to strengthen and expand its programs including:

- Improving environmental health surveillance by expanding the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network to a true nationwide network. Currently, the program provides funding to only 26 state and local health departments.
- Expanding critically underfunded childhood lead poisoning prevention activities by increasing funding for CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program which will allow CDC to provide grants to all 50 states and currently funded localities for surveillance to determine the extent of childhood lead poisoning, as well as educate the public and healthcare providers about lead poisoning, and ensure that lead-exposed children received needed medical and environmental follow-up services.
- Expanding the National Biomonitoring Network by providing additional resources to increase the number of states that can undertake state population-based biomonitoring surveillance. Communities continue to express concern about exposure to chemicals in our everyday lives and during environmental emergencies yet we are often unable to provide data about these exposures at the state and local level.

- Strengthening and expanding funding to additional states under the National Asthma Control Program that tracks asthma prevalence, promotes asthma control and prevention and builds capacity in state programs. It is estimated that 24 million Americans currently have asthma, including more than 6 million children. The program has been highly effective: the rate of asthma has increased, yet asthma mortality and morbidity rates have decreased.
- Increasing funding for the Climate and Health Program which is currently providing 16 states, two cities, three tribes and three territories (covering 50 percent of the U.S. population) with funding to help diagnose and prepare for the serious adverse health impacts of climate change including extreme heat, more severe storms, floods, droughts, increases in air pollution and pollen and the spread of infectious and vector-borne diseases – such as Lyme disease and dengue fever. Increased funding will allow CDC to fund additional states and communities and identify which interventions most effectively protect the public from the negative health effects of climate change.

Increasing our investments in environmental health prevention activities today will help reduce illness, disease, injury and even death. Relying solely on our health care system to tackle the dangerous problems – dirty air and water, toxic substances, lead poisoning, extreme weather and many other environmental hazards – that occur outside the walls of the clinic is a costly and ineffective solution. However, adequate investments today and into the future in core environmental health activities can be a critical down payment on health, productivity and happiness of countless Americans. We thank you for considering this recommendation and we look forward to working with you as you move forward with the FY 2021 appropriations process.

Please contact Don Hoppert at donald.hoppert@apha.org or 202-777-2514 with any questions regarding our request.

Sincerely,

Allergy & Asthma Network
 Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
 American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
 American Academy of Pediatrics
 American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
 American College of Preventive Medicine
 American Heart Association
 American Lung Association
 American Psychological Association
 American Public Health Association
 Association of Asthma Educators
 Association of Public Health Laboratories
 Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
 Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
 Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
 Center for Climate Change and Health

Children's Environmental Health Network
Climate for Health, ecoAmerica
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Health Care Without Harm
Health Resources in Action
March of Dimes
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Environmental Health Association
National WIC Association
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Prevention Institute
Public Health Institute
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
Trust for America's Health
Washington State Department of Health

Cc: House Appropriations Committee
Senate Appropriations Committee