



March 4, 2020

Dear Senator/Representative:

Our organizations write to thank you for your previous funding support for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Asthma Control Program in the Fiscal Year (FY) support a \$4 million increase in funding for CDC’s National Asthma Control Program, bringing funding to \$34.0 million for FY 2021.

Currently, 24 states and Puerto Rico receive critical funding from the National Asthma Control Program to support state and local efforts to reduce the burden of asthma, and as the result of the \$1 million increase in FY20, one more state will be added. But last year, almost ten states, cities and other entities were approved but not funded for the next five-year cycle. This includes Hawaii, Mississippi, Oregon and Pennsylvania, which had been previously funded. Our request for \$34 million in funding for the National Asthma Control Program would allow the program to fund additional states that have already been approved to combat the terrible human and economic burden caused by asthma.

Asthma remains a serious and costly health issue in our nation. It is estimated that 24.8 million Americans have asthma, of whom 5.5 million are children, representing 7.2 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 \$50.3 billion annually in healthcare costs, \$3 billion in missed school and workdays and \$29 billion from

mortality. Tragically, while most deaths caused by asthma can be prevented, this disease still claims the lives of 3500 Americans each year.

The National Asthma Control Program is making a difference in improving disease outcomes. Since the inception of the National Asthma Control Program in 1999, death rates have decreased by 41 percent. 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 5 percent from 2001 to 2016 and there were 24 percent fewer hospitalizations due to asthma from 2003 to 2010. Through its Controlling Childhood Asthma, Reducing Emergencies (CCARE) initiative, CDC has set a goal of preventing half a million asthma related hospitalizations and emergency department visits among children in five years. Funding for additional states would be an important step in making progress towards this goal.

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. We know that when it comes to asthma management, an investment made today will save money tomorrow.

We ask for your leadership in ensuring that CDC's National Asthma Control Program remains a robust and effective program by **supporting funding in FY21 of at least \$34.0 million.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Lung Association
American Medical Student Association
American Thoracic Society
Association of Asthma Educators
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Asthma and Allergy Network
Children's National Hospital
Families USA
First Focus Campaign for Children
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Health Resources in Action
Healthy Schools Campaign
National Association of School Nurses
National Center for Healthy Housing
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (RAMP)
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
Trust for America's Health