



The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

April 16, 2025

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

On behalf of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), the leading patient organization advocating for people with asthma and allergies, and the oldest asthma and allergy patient group in the world, I am writing to request your support in encouraging President Trump to issue a proclamation declaring May as “National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month.”

National Asthma and Allergy Awareness was first recognized in 1984 by President Reagan at AAFA’s request. We hope you will support continuing this tradition to highlight the importance of asthma and allergy prevention and management.

Nearly 28 million people in the United States, including about 5 million children, have asthma and about 10 people still die every day from asthma.<sup>1,2</sup> As of 2013, asthma costs our society an estimated \$82 billion in direct and indirect expenses every year, including medical costs related to 4.9 million office visits, 1.5 million emergency visits, and 169,330 hospitalizations.<sup>3</sup> In CPI-adjusted dollars, that \$82 billion equates to \$113 billion in 2025. It is also estimated that, from 2019 to 2038, the total cost of uncontrolled asthma could exceed \$963 billion in direct and indirect costs.<sup>4</sup> Asthma is

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. NHIS Adult Summary Health Statistics. Data accessed September 19, 2024. Available from <https://data.cdc.gov/d/25m4-6qqq>

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. NHIS Child Summary Health Statistics. Data accessed September 19, 2024. Available from <https://data.cdc.gov/d/wxz7-ekz9>

<sup>3</sup> Nurmagambetov, T., Kuwahara, R., & Garbe, P. (2018). The Economic Burden of Asthma in the United States, 2008–2013. *Annals of the American Thoracic Society*, 15(3), 348–356. <https://doi.org/10.1513/annalsats.201703-259oc>

<sup>4</sup> Yaghoubi, M., Adibi, A., Safari, A., FitzGerald, J. M., & Sadatsafavi, M. (2019). The Projected Economic and Health Burden of Uncontrolled Asthma in the United States. *American journal of*



the leading chronic disease among children and a top reason for missed school days.

Food allergies represent another significant burden on over 20 million Americans. Approximately one in sixteen children and adults in the U.S have food allergies.<sup>5,6</sup> Food allergies can result in a severe reaction caused anaphylaxis that in rare cases can lead to death. Unfortunately, the prevalence and impact of food allergies in the U.S. are increasing; for example, the rate of emergency room visits for food-related anaphylaxis increased by 124% from 2005 through 2014.<sup>7</sup> Children with food allergies are also two to four times more likely to have asthma or other allergic diseases.<sup>8</sup>

We understand that the Administration supports efforts to strengthen the nation's health infrastructure, reduce chronic disease, and empower individuals and families with tools to protect their health. Asthma and allergy prevention fits within these goals—whether by improving indoor and outdoor air quality, ensuring clear and consistent food labeling, or expanding access to effective treatments and education.

We hope that the elimination of the CDC's National Asthma Control Program (NACP) as part of restructuring the Department of Health and Human Services was an oversight. This program has provided essential federal support to state and local asthma control efforts for over 25 years. For every \$1 spent on the program, an

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*respiratory and critical care medicine*, 200(9), 1102–1112. <https://doi.org/10.1164/rccm.201901-0016OC>

<sup>5</sup> Ng, A.E. & Boersma, P. (2023). NCHS Data Brief, no 460: Diagnosed allergic conditions in adults: United States, 2021. National Center for Health Statistics. <https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc:122809>

<sup>6</sup> Zablotsky, B., Black, L.I., & Akinbami, L.J. (2023). NCHS Data Brief, no 459: Diagnosed allergic conditions in children aged 0–17 years: United States, 2021. National Center for Health Statistics. <https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc:123250>

<sup>7</sup> Motosue et al., "Increasing Emergency Department Visits for Anaphylaxis, 2005–2014." [J Allergy Clin Immunol Pract.](#) 2017 Jan – Feb;5(1):171–175.

<sup>8</sup> Branum, A., & Lukacs, S. (2019). Food Allergy Among U.S. Children: Trends in Prevalence and Hospitalizations. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Center for Health Statistics. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db10.htm>



average of \$71 is saved.<sup>9</sup> Continued investment in programs like NACP ensures that states have the tools and technical assistance needed to improve asthma care and protect public health.

Raising awareness and educating people on how to manage asthma and allergies is key to beginning to address the burden of disease. We ask that you continue to recognize the importance of raising awareness for the millions of Americans and their families living with asthma and allergies and have included a draft proclamation for President Trump to use to this letter. Thank you for your consideration and leadership.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Mendez  
President & CEO  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

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By the President of the United States of America

*A Proclamation*

Expressing support for the designation of May as “National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month”.

Whereas 4,900,000 children in the United States currently have asthma;

Whereas nearly 28,000,000 people in the United States, have asthma;

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<sup>9</sup> CDC’s National Asthma Control Program: An Investment in America’s Health. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2013.



Whereas, in 2018, on average, children missed more than 7,900,000 days of school and adults missed 10,900,000 days of work because of asthma;

Whereas asthma is one of the most common noncommunicable diseases among children;

Whereas about 1,000,000 individuals per year visit emergency departments because of asthma's effects;

Whereas asthma is a leading cause of hospitalizations and school absences due to a chronic disease among children;

Whereas the total economic cost of asthma in the United States was \$81,900,000,000 per year from 2008 to 2013, or \$113,000,000,000 in CPI-adjusted dollars in 2025;

Whereas fewer than half of people with asthma report being given an asthma action plan, which is key to the prevention of asthma attacks;

Whereas Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous individuals in the United States have the highest asthma rates;

Whereas asthma is a manageable disease that claimed the lives of over 3,500 Americans in 2021;

Whereas 20,300,000 people in the United States have food allergies, including about 4,300,000 children;

Whereas food allergy has increased among United States children over the past 20 years, with the greatest increase in Black children;

Whereas children with food allergies are 2 to 4 times more likely to have asthma or other allergic diseases; and

Whereas May would be an appropriation month to designate as "Asthma and allergy Awareness Month":



Now, therefore, I, Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the Month of May 2025 as “National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month” and calls upon the American people to observe such month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.