

April 13, 2011

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The following leading national public health organizations express serious concern over recent Congressional proposals to eliminate, reclassify or substantially reduce the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Fund), an essential provision in the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Collectively, we urge you to strongly oppose such efforts.

As you know, the Fund is a dedicated investment in community prevention and state and local public health infrastructure and workforce and is a much-needed down payment on the health and economic well being of all Americans. The Fund is among the most significant provisions in ACA that help achieve a goal set by President Obama during the 2008 campaign, "Simply put, in the absence of a radical shift towards prevention and public health, we will not be successful in containing medical costs or improving the health of the American people."¹

Nearly 600 national, state, and local organizations (see attached) support the Fund as a primary vehicle for making public health investments that would create jobs and help to lower long-term health care costs. The Fund fills a role that has the support of the American people -- a public opinion survey conducted by TFAH and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) found that 71 percent of Americans favored an increased investment in disease prevention.

States are already using Prevention Fund dollars to build epidemiology and laboratory capacity to track and respond to disease outbreaks, train the nation's public health workforce, prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, reduce tobacco use, and help control the obesity epidemic. The Fund's mandatory status guarantees an ongoing commitment to prevention unprecedented in today's "sick care" system, and eliminating it would be an enormous step backwards in our progress on cost containment, public health modernization, and wellness promotion. Senator Tom Harkin said it best in recent public testimony, "Two thirds of the increase in health care spending between 1987 and 2000 was due to increased prevalence of chronic diseases. The Prevention Fund gives us an unprecedented opportunity to bend the cost curve: overall, the return on investment in community-based prevention interventions is six dollars for every dollar invested."

¹ Obama '08, "Barack Obama's Plan for a Healthy America: Lowering Health Care Costs and Ensuring Affordable, High-Quality Health Care for All." Available from: <http://www.barackobama.com/pdf/HealthPlanFull.pdf>

Millions of dollars in mandatory funding are spent each year via the Medicare, Medicaid, and other federal health care programs to pay for health care services once patients develop an acute illness, injury or chronic disease and present for treatment in our health care system. Yet prior to the creation of the Fund, there was no equivalent funding for efforts to promote wellness, prevent disease, and protect against public health or bioterror emergencies. At a time when today's children are in danger of becoming the first generation in American history to live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents, we need to get serious as a nation about our commitment to prevention, wellness, and preparedness.

Once again, we urge you to oppose efforts to reclassify or eliminate the Prevention and Public Health Fund. If we are serious about turning our sick care system into a disease prevention system and making wellness a priority, then now is the time to increase, rather than decrease our commitment to prevention and public health efforts.

Sincerely,



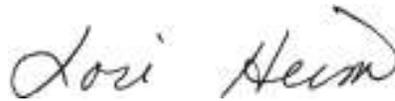
David Munar
President and CEO
AIDS Foundation of Chicago



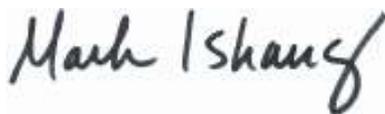
Eric J. Hall
President and Chief Executive Officer
Alzheimer's Foundation of America



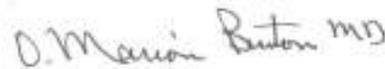
Craig E. Thompson
Executive Director
AIDS Project Los Angeles



Lori Heim, MD, FAAFP
Chair
AAFP Board of Directors



Mark Ishaug
President and CEO
AIDS United



O. Marion Burton, MD FAAP
President
American Academy of Pediatrics



Roberta S. Carlin, MS, JD
Executive Director
American Association on Health and
Disability



Charles D. Connor
President and CEO
American Lung Association



Warner Hudson, MD
President
American College of Occupational and
Environmental Medicine



Michael A. Barry, CAE
Executive Director
American College of Preventive
Medicine



Raymond F. Gist, D.D.S.
President
American Dental Association



Scott Goudeseune
President and CEO
American Council on Exercise



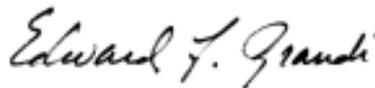
Larry Hausner
Chief Executive Officer
American Diabetes Association



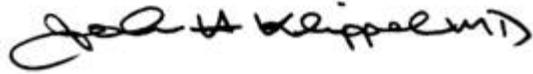
Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP,
FACEP (E)
Executive Director
American Public Health Association



Nancy Brown
Chief Executive Officer
American Heart Association



Edward Grandi
Executive Director
American Sleep Apnea Association



John H. Klippel, MD
President and CEO
Arthritis Foundation



Paul E. Jarris, MD, MBA
Executive Director
Association of State & Territorial
Health Officials



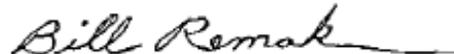
Kathy Lim Ko
CEO and President
Asian & Pacific Islander American
Health Forum



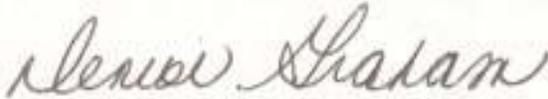
Karen Probert, MS, RD
Executive Director
Association of State & Territorial
Public Health Nutrition Directors



Michael Fraser, PhD CAE
Chief Executive Officer
Association of Maternal and Child
Health Programs



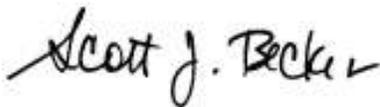
Bill Remak, BSMT, BSPH, SGNA, AHCJ
Chairman, California Hepatitis C Task
Force
Chair, National Association of
Hepatitis Task Forces



Denise Graham
Executive Vice President
Association for Professionals in
Infection Control and Epidemiology



Matthew L. Myers
President
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids



Scott J. Becker, MS
Executive Director
Association of Public Health
Laboratories



Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Center for Science in the Public
Interest



Catherine Dunham
Executive Director
Children's Dental Health Project



Patrick J. McConnon, MPH
Executive Director
Council of State and Territorial
Epidemiologists



Don Mathis
President & CEO
Community Action Partnership



Ron Pollack
Executive Director
Families USA



Robert Restuccia
Executive Director
Community Catalist



Thelma King Thiel
Chair and CEO
Hepatitis Foundation International



Andy Fisher
Executive Director
Community Food Security Coalition



Julie Davids
Director
HIV Prevention Justice Alliance



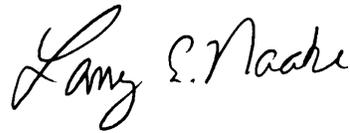
Ron Z. Goetzel, Ph.D.
Research Professor and Director
Institute for Health and Productivity
Studies
Rollins School of Public Health, Emory
University



Chad M. Silva, JD
Policy Director
Latino Coalition for a Healthy
California



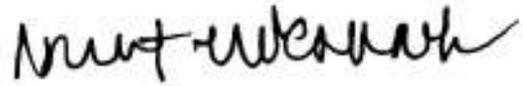
Margaret Moran
National President
League of United Latin American
Citizens



Larry E. Naake
Executive Director
National Association of Counties



Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H
Director and Health Officer
Los Angeles County Department of
Public Health



Robert M. Pestronk
Executive Director
National Association of County and
City Health Officials



Raquel Algarin
Executive Director
Lower East Side Harm Reduction
Center



Andrew Webber
President and CEO
National Business Coalition on Health



David L. Shern, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Mental Health America



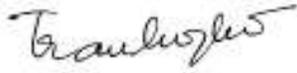
Hutson W. Inniss
Executive Director
National Coalition for LGBT Health



John W. Robitscher, MPH
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Chronic
Disease Directors



Sheila Franklin
Executive Director
National Coalition for Promoting
Physical Activity



Ho Luong Tran, M.D., M.P.H.
President and CEO
National Council of Asian Pacific
Islander Physicians



Tine Hansen-Turton
Executive Director
National Nursing Centers Consortium



Keith Mason
Executive Director
National Forum for Heart Disease and
Stroke Prevention



Teri Mills MS, RN, CNE
President
National Nursing Network
Organization



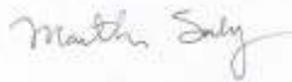
Lark Galloway-Gilliam, MPA
Chair
National Health Equity Coalition



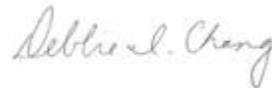
Lark Galloway-Gilliam, MPA
President
National REACH Coalition



Daniel C. Montoya
Deputy Executive Director
National Minority AIDS Council



Martha Saly
Director
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable



Debbie I. Chang
Vice President, Policy & Prevention
Nemours



Joseph Kimbrell, MA, LCSW
Chief Executive Officer
National Network of Public Health
Institutes



Robert Gogats
President
New Jersey Association of County and
City Health Officers



Jeffrey Basinger
Executive Director
Northern Colorado AIDS Project



Ron Bialek, MPP, CQIA
President/CEO
Public Health Foundation



Hardy Spoehr
Executive Director
Papa Ola Lokahi



Marice Ashe, JD, MPH
Executive Director
Public Health Law & Policy



Jud Richland, MPH
President and CEO
Partnership for Prevention



Ellen Rautenberg
President and CEO
Public Health Solutions



Angela Glover Blackwell
Founder and CEO
PolicyLink



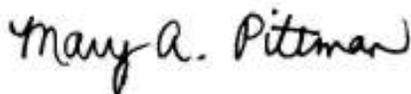
Kevin Mills
Vice President of Policy
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy



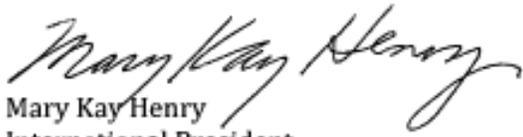
Larry Cohen, MSW
Founder, Executive Director
Prevention Institute



Amber N. Williams
Executive Director
Safe States Alliance



Mary Pittman
President and CEO
Public Health Institute



Mary Kay Henry
International President
Service Employees International
Union, CTW, CLC



Jeffrey Levi, PhD
Executive Director
Trust for America's Health



Mickey S. Urdea, Ph.D.
CEO and Chairman
Tethys Bioscience, Inc.



Jonathan Lever
Vice President for Health Strategy &
Innovation
YMCA of the USA



Michael Ruppal
Executive Director
The AIDS Institute