

December 21, 2017

The Honorable Eric Hargan
Acting Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Acting Secretary Hargan:

Our organizations were deeply concerned to read the reports in the [Washington Post](#) starting on Friday, December 15, 2017, that Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) budget analysts were informed they are discouraged from using seven words – including “vulnerable,” “entitlement,” “diversity,” “transgender,” “fetus,” “evidence-based” and “science-based” – as they prepare the President’s Fiscal Year 2019 budget. As the nation’s premier public health agency, the CDC cannot carry out its mission of improving the health and safety of all Americans when its staff are urged to avoid using basic phrases that are so intrinsic to public health.

CDC serves as the command center for the nation’s public health defense system against emerging and reemerging infectious diseases, and other threats to health and safety. From aiding in the surveillance, detection and prevention of the Zika virus to playing a lead role in the control of Ebola in West Africa and detecting and responding to cases in the U.S., to monitoring and investigating disease outbreaks to pandemic flu preparedness, to addressing chronic diseases. CDC is the nation’s – and the world’s – expert resource and response center, coordinating communications and action and serving as the laboratory reference center. States, communities and the international community rely on CDC for accurate information and direction in a crisis or outbreak. In the United States, CDC serves as a leader in the federal-state-local public health enterprise, which encompasses state, territorial and local health agencies that protect the public every day. None of this can occur unless CDC is able to convey who is at risk, what the risk is and how the science dictates the risk be addressed using established language – including the seven words as appropriate.

Science is the bedrock of sound public health and medical decision-making – and it should not be subject to partisan politics. HHS – including CDC – will not be successful in improving the health of Americans affected by these conditions if there is political interference – real or perceived – whether it be aimed at language or at undermining key scientific principles and policies. Our organizations urge the Department of Health and Human Services to assure the Department’s public health professionals and the public that science – and descriptions of it – remain at the heart of its mission. We look forward to your response clarifying these troubling reports.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days
AAHIVM
Academic Pediatric Association
Academy for Eating Disorders
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
AcademyHealth

Action for a Better Tomorrow - Sauk Valley
Action on Smoking and Health
Addiction Connections Resource
Advocate Medical Group
Advocates for Better Children's Diets
Advocates for Youth
African American Health Alliance
Alaska Public Health Association
Ali Forney Center
Allergy & Asthma Network
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of HIV Medicine
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Directors of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association of Health and Disability
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Council on Exercise
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Federation of Teachers
American Geriatrics Society
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
American Lung Association
American Medical Student Association
American Muslim Health Professionals
American Pediatric Society
American Podiatric Medical Association, Inc.
American Public Health Association
American Sexual Health Association
American Society for Microbiology
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene
American Statistical Association
American Thoracic Society
Arkansas Public Health Association
Asian Services In Action
Association of Accredited Public Health Programs
Association of Black Cardiologists
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved
Association of Departments of Family Medicine
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
Association of Ohio Health Commissioners, Inc.

Association of Population Centers
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Baltimore City Health Department
Big Cities Health Coalition
Blue Ridge Pride Center, Inc.
Boston Public Health Commission
Boulder County Public Health
Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center
Brooklyn Community Pride Center
Building Home Together
CAEAR Coalition
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
California Public Health Association-North
Callen-Lorde Community Health Center
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands
Celmatix Inc.
Center for American Progress
Center for Reproductive Rights
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Center on Halsted
Center on Social Disparities in Health, University of California, San Francisco
CenterLink
Chicago Department of Public Health
Children's Environmental Health Network
Cleveland Department of Public Health
Coalition for Health Funding
Colorado Children's Immunization Coalition
Colorado Health Institute
Community Health Councils
Connecticut Public Health Association
Contact Wellness Foundation
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
CRI International Center for Biotechnology
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association
Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology, Michigan State University
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
Detroit Wayne County Health Authority (d.b.a. Authority Health)
Doctors for America
Dorchester County Health Department
Drexel University Dornsife School of Public Health
East Bay Refugee Forum
Element Health, Inc.
Entomological Society of America
Equality New York
EverThrive Illinois

Ferring Pharmaceuticals
FORGE, Inc.
Friends of the Earth
Futures Without Violence
Gay & Lesbian Center of Bakersfield
Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center
GC University Lahore
Georgia Public Health Association
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Hawaii Public Health Association
Health Resources in Action
HealthHIV
Henry Ford Medical Group
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hispanic Federation
HIV Medicine Association
HLN Consulting, LLC
Homeowners Against Deficient Dwellings
Human Impact Partners
Identity Youth Center
Illinois Public Health Association
Immunization Action Coalition
Immunize Nevada
Indivisible Brookfield
Indivisible Carbondale
Indivisible Illinois
Indivisible South Suburban Chicago
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Institute for Basic Research
Institute of Systems Biology
Iowa Public Health Association
IQ Products
Jacobs Institute of Women's Health
JASMYN
Juneau Biosciences, LLC
Kansas City, Missouri Health Department
Kentucky Population Health Institute
KFSHRC
Lakeshore Foundation
Latino Commission on AIDS
LGBT Center OC
LGBT Detroit
LGBT Network
LGBTQ Law Project of NYLAG
Local Public Health Association of Minnesota
Long Island Crisis Center
Long Island Gay and Lesbian Youth (LIGALY)

Long Island LGBT Community Center (The Center)
Long Island Pride
Louisiana Public Health Association
Lung Cancer Alliance
Lynchburg Diversity Center
Magee-Womens Research Institute
March of Dimes
Maricopa County Department of Public Health
Mazzoni Center
Medical Students for Choice
Missouri Public Health Association
MJH Grant Consulting
Montgomery County Health Department
Montana Public Health Association
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NASTAD
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
National Association for Health and Fitness
National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems
National Association of Councils on Development Disabilities
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Black Justice Coalition
National Black Nurses Association
National Blood Clot Alliance
National Center for Health Research (NCHR)
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Collaborative for Health Equity
National Consumers League
National Council of Jewish Women
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Health Law Program
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Medical Association
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives
National Recreation and Park Association
National Tuberculosis Controllers Association
National Women's Health Network
Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors
Nevada Public Health Association
New Hampshire Public Health Association
New Mexico Public Health Association
New Mexico Public Health Institute

New Progressive Alliance
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
North American Primary Care Research Group
North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology
North Carolina Public Health Association
North County LGBTQ Resource Center
North Dakota Public Health Association
Ohio Public Health Association
one n ten
Oregon Public Health Association
Origins FTD, Inc.
Out Alliance
Pacific Pride Foundation
PAI
Pediatric Policy Council
Pennsylvania Public Health Association
People For the American Way
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Association of America
Power to Decide
Pregnancy Specialty Center of Texas
Prevent Blindness
Prevention Institute
Pride and Joy Families/Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project
Pride at Work
Pride Center of the Capital Region
Pride for Youth
Program on Endocrine Disruptor Strategies, Commonweal
Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment
Progressive Congress Action Fund
Projects for Environmental Health, Knowledge, & Action, Inc.
Public Citizen
Public Health Advocates
Public Health Association of Nebraska
Public Health Association of NYC
Public Health Institute
Public Health Justice Collective
Pulmonary Fibrosis Advocates
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition
Rainbow Center
Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness
Research!America
Resource Center
Results for America
Robinson Research Institute
S2AY Rural Health Network
Sacramento LGBT Community Center

Safe States Alliance
SAGE
San Antonio Metropolitan Health District
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
School-Based Health Alliance
Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders - Long Island (SAGE-LI)
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)
SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Public Health Education
Society for Reproductive Biology
Society for the Study of Reproduction
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
South Carolina Public Health Association
Southern Tier AIDS Program
Southwest Center for Health Innovation
Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision
Spina Bifida Association
State Key Laboratory of Reproductive Medicine, Nanjing Medical University
SunServe
Sustainability and Health Equity Lab/University of California, Berkeley
Texas Association of City & County Health Officials
The AIDS Institute
The Arc of the United States
The Center: 7 Rivers LGBTQ Connection
The Consortium
The Cortland LGBTQ Center
The Empowered Patient Coalition
The Feinstein Institute for Medical Research
The Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada
The Immunization Partnership
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center
The LGBT Center of Greater Reading
The LGBTQ Center of Long Beach
The LOFT LGBT Center
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
The National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable
The Pride Center at Equality Park
The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital
The San Diego LGBT Community Center
The Source LGBT+ Center
The Trevor Project
The University of Texas Medical Branch
Transgender Law Center
Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund
Trust for America's Health

Truth Initiative
UC Irvine Center for Occupational and Environmental Health
University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute
University Reproductive Associates
USDA-ARS
Utah Public Health Association
Vermont Public Health Association
Washington County Gay Straight Alliance, Inc.
Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials
Washington State Public Health Association
Welcome Back Initiative
West Suburban Action League
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition
Whitman-Walker Health
Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health
Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards
Wisconsin Public Health Association
Woodstock Institute
Youth Outlook
Youth OUTright WNC, Inc.

Cc: Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention