



March 9, 2017

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) 2017 and ask for your strong support again in Fiscal Year 2018. Specifically, we ask that you support level funding for CDC's National Asthma Control Program at \$29.0 million for FY 2018.

In FY2016, Congress increased funding for the National Asthma Control Program, which resulted in funding for two additional states to help combat asthma. At present, 24 states and Puerto Rico receive critical funding from the National Asthma Control Program. Our request for level funding for the National Asthma Control Program at \$29.0 million would ensure these much needed resources would continue to assist states with combatting the terrible human and economic burden caused by asthma.

Asthma remains a serious and costly health issue in our nation. It is estimated that 25 million Americans have asthma, of whom 6 million are children, representing 10 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 \$50.1 billion annually in healthcare costs, 13.8 million missed school days; and 10.1 million missed days of work and costs \$5.9 billion in lost productivity. 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 39 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 12 percent from 2001 to 2015 and there were 24 percent fewer hospitalizations due to asthma from 2003 to 2010.

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. While our organizations recognize

these difficult financial times, we also know that when it comes to asthma management, an investment made today will save money tomorrow.

We continue to encourage Congress to work to enact long-term sequester relief via a balanced approach that provides much-needed resources to non-defense discretionary accounts, particularly the 302(b) Labor-HHS-Education subcommittee, which did not receive proportional relief under the 2015 allocations.

We thank you again for your support in FY17 and ask for your leadership in ensuring that CDC's National Asthma Control Program remains a robust and effective program by supporting funding in FY18 of at least \$29.0 million.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Allergy and Asthma Network
American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
American Lung Association
American Thoracic Society
Association of Asthma Educators
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Asthma Regional Council of New England
Children's National Health System
First Focus
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Health Resources in Action
Pioneer Valley Asthma Coalition (MA)
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention
Trust for America's Health