

# AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION® Fighting for Air

Albert A. Rizzo, M.D.  
Chair  
National Board of Directors

April 24, 2012

Ross P. Lanzafame, Esq.  
Chair-Elect  
National Board of Directors

The Honorable Fred Upton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

H. James Gooden  
Past-Chair

Christine L. Bryant  
Secretary/Treasurer

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Waxman:

Geri Reinardy, M.P.A.  
Speaker  
Nationwide Assembly

On behalf the millions of Americans with lung diseases, I am writing to strongly oppose any attempts to repeal the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Prevention Fund). The American Lung Association has repeatedly stated our support for the Fund and our fierce opposition to any attempts to divert or use the Prevention Fund for any purposes other than what it was originally intended in the Affordable Care Act. The Lung Association also strongly opposes any attempts to make further cuts to health programs.

Marcia D. Williams, Ed.D.  
Speaker-Elect  
Nationwide Assembly

## NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Charles D. Connor  
President &  
Chief Executive Officer

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), chronic diseases account for 75 percent of all health care costs. Investments must be made to prevent and chronic disease and the Prevention and Public Health Fund is already helping Americans across the country to make healthier choices and take responsibility for their own health and the health of their families. Because of the Prevention Fund, states and communities are now able to help more people quit smoking through cessation programs and improve lung health by preventing and treating lung diseases, including COPD, lung cancer, and asthma. It is also allowing states and communities to monitor outbreaks of infectious diseases, such as influenza, and enhance prevention services in low-income and underserved communities.

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Tobacco-related diseases are the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, killing over 443,000 Americans each year. Smoking alone costs the U.S. economy \$193 billion dollars each year, \$96 billion in direct health care costs and \$97 billion in lost productivity. CDC's *Tips from Former Smokers* media campaign, which was paid for by the Fund, has already resulted in tens of thousands of additional calls to 1-800-QUIT NOW by smokers seeking help in quitting. This is tangible evidence of the Fund having a positive impact.

[www.LungUSA.org](http://www.LungUSA.org)

Recent studies show the promise of prevention – that investing in tobacco control programs save money *and* lives. Earlier this year, a study conducted by economists at George Washington University was published and found that for every \$1 invested in Massachusetts' comprehensive Medicaid quit smoking program saved \$3 – in just over one year. Another study found that Washington State saved \$5 for every \$1 invested in comprehensive tobacco programs from 2000-2009. In sum, prevention works, it saves lives and saves money.

Cutting or eliminating the Prevention Fund and other investments in our nation's health are short-sided at best. Such cuts will endanger the health and wellness of those in your communities as critical public health programs and services are put in jeopardy, which will lead to greater health care costs. We urge you to reject any further cuts to health programs and to the Prevention Fund. Please stand up for these critical investments so that the dollars can be put to work in our communities to prevent and reduce diseases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CD Connor', written in a cursive style.

Charles D. Connor  
President and CEO

Cc: Committee on Energy and Commerce