

February 10, 2009

Dear Conferee:

Our 171 organizations express our gratitude and support for the robust public health provisions included in the House-passed version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and our extreme disappointment over the \$5.8 billion in prevention and wellness funding stripped from the Senate bill. We urge you to maintain the House-passed level of \$3 billion for prevention and wellness in the final enacted version of the bill.

As you know, the public health system is experiencing severe workforce shortages. State and local health departments lost over 11,000 jobs last year. The Prevention and Wellness Fund included in the House bill would help to restore lost jobs and prevent a projected additional 10,000 job vacancies from occurring next year in health departments.

During an economic downturn, it is important to have a strong safety net to support individuals who are losing their health coverage. As unemployment rates soar, unemployed workers and their families turn to state and local health departments and community-based organizations for basic health services, like immunizations and preventive services that are provided free of charge to those who cannot afford them. Toward that end, we hope that you will consider an investment in wellness and prevention as a means of restoring and creating jobs, as well as offering assistance to struggling families.

The recovery and reinvestment legislation affords the opportunity to stimulate the economy and strengthen our investment in health infrastructure and workforce while building stronger, healthier communities. This investment can also help stave off the onset of many costly chronic diseases and avoid the need for treatment of expensive complications of disease. Controlling health care costs will be critical to getting the country's economy back on track. Fundamental health care reform, particularly reform that focuses on ways to keep Americans healthier, must be part of solving our current financial crisis. Funding for public health and disease prevention in the stimulus bill is a down payment toward reducing health care costs over the long term.

Our nation needs a healthy and productive population to meet the challenges of the future, and rebound from these difficult times. An investment in public health will put us on a preferred path of prevention and wellness. To prevent further job loss in state and local health departments, stimulate job creation in the health field, and fully capitalize on the opportunity to promote health, we ask that you include at least \$3 billion for prevention and wellness in the final version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Active Transportation Alliance (IL)  
Advocates for Better Children's Diets  
AHIA - NAIFA Health & Employee Benefits  
AIDS Action Council  
ALERT Health, Inc.  
Alzheimer's Foundation of America  
American Council on Exercise  
American School Health Association  
America Walks

American Academy of Nursing  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Academy of Physician Assistants  
American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance  
American Association for Health Education  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American College of Sports Medicine  
American Diabetes Association  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Public Health Association  
American School Health Association  
American Social Health Association  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Thoracic Society  
Amputee Coalition of America  
Arthritis Foundation  
Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association  
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research  
Association of Immunization Managers  
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors  
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Autism Society of America  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Brain Injury Association of America  
Breathe California  
California Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors  
California Certification Board of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors  
California Foundation for the Advancement of Addiction Professionals  
Campaign for Public Health  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
Campaign to End Obesity  
Center for Biosecurity, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Children's Dental Health Project  
CityMatCH  
Coalition for Health Services Research  
Coalition for Public Health  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Community Health Councils  
Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute  
Community Partners for Better Health (NV)  
Defeat Diabetes Foundation  
Directors of Health Promotion and Education  
DMAA: The Care Continuum Alliance  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Evergreen State Amateur Athletic Council (WA)  
Every Child By Two  
Faces and Voices of Recovery  
FamilyCook Productions  
Fall Prevention Center of Excellence  
Friends of NCHS  
Friends of SAMHSA  
Fund a Nurse, Inc  
GlaxoSmithKline  
Health Education Network of Delaware  
Healthcare Consortium  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
Healthy Homes Collaborative  
Hep C Connection  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Hepatitis C Association  
Hepatitis Foundation International  
High Sierra Area Health Education Center  
HIV Medicine Association  
Home Safety Council  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Institute of Public Health - Georgia State University  
International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association  
March of Dimes Foundation  
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors  
National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems  
National Association for Sport and Physical Education  
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Association of Neonatal Nurses  
National Association of People with AIDS  
National Association of State EMS Officials  
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity  
National Coalition of STD Directors

National Council on Aging  
National Disease Clusters Alliance  
National Environmental Health Association  
National Health Council  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Hispanic Health Foundation  
National Kidney Foundation  
National Medical Association  
National Minority AIDS Council  
National Nurses Advisory Council  
National Nursing Centers Consortium  
National Nursing Network Organization  
National PTA  
National REACH Coalition for the Elimination of Health Disparities  
National Recreation and Park Association  
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable  
National WIC Association  
Nemours  
New Mexico Hepatitis C Alliance  
New York State Nutrition Council  
North Shore Health Project (MA)  
Northwest Federation of Community Organizations  
OraSure Technologies  
Partners for a Healthy Nevada  
Partnership for Prevention  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc.  
Prevention Institute  
Public Health Foundation  
Public Health Institute  
Public Health-Seattle & King County (WA)  
Red River Democrats  
Research!America  
Researchers against Inactivity-related Disorders  
RWJF Center for Health Policy  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership  
Save the Children  
Seattle Sports Commission  
Service Employees International Union  
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S.  
Shaping America's Health  
Snohomish Health District  
Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Control  
Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
Society for Public Health Education  
Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association  
Sports4Kids  
State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association

Strategic Health Policy International, Inc.  
The AIDS Institute  
The Association of Washington Public Hospital Districts  
The Healthcare Consortium, Inc (Hudson, NY)  
The National TB Controllers Association  
The New York Academy of Medicine  
The Seniors Coalition  
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
The YBH Project, Inc.  
Trust for America's Health  
UCHAPS: Urban Coalition for HIV/AIDS Prevention Services  
United Fresh Produce Association  
U.S. PIRG  
Visiting Nurse Associations of America  
Washington Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity  
Washington Health Foundation- Healthiest State in the Nation Campaign  
Women's Sports Foundation  
YMCA of the USA