

March 28, 2012

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As leaders of national organizations committed to the public's health, we are writing to express our deep disappointment in your Administration's support for reducing the investment in the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Fund). The proposed cut to the Fund in your FY2013 budget helped pave the way for the \$6.25 billion cut that was included in HR 3630, the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act, which you signed into law in February. This represents an enormous step backward in our commitment to prevention and compromises our ability to make progress on cost containment, public health modernization, and wellness promotion. We urge you to publicly state your commitment to oppose any future cuts in the Fund.

Less than five percent of national health spending is devoted to public health. Prior to creation of the Fund, there was no reliable investment to promote wellness, prevent disease and protect against public health or bioterrorism emergencies. The consequences of years of neglect are clear – hundreds of billions of dollars in mandatory funding are spent each year through Medicare, Medicaid, and other federal health care programs to pay for health care services once patients develop an acute illness, disability, injury, or chronic disease and present for treatment in our health care system.

Reflective of the fact that evidence-based prevention programs are the key to reducing health costs, prevention was one of the three key pillars of health reform. The Prevention and Public Health Fund was created in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and designed as a guaranteed funding stream and an ongoing commitment to prevention. While the cost of the Fund represented just two percent of the outlays authorized by the ACA, states and communities are already using these prevention dollars to build epidemiology and laboratory capacity to track and respond to disease outbreaks, train the nation's public health workforce, modernize vaccine systems, prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, reduce tobacco use, promote behavioral health, prevent injuries, help control the obesity epidemic, reduce health disparities, and build the evidence base to continually enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of these public health programs.

This small but vitally important investment is essential if we are to reduce the growth of chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes, which are the primary drivers in the

increase in health costs. Research shows that if current trends continue, obesity rates could be expected to grow from 32 percent to 50-51 percent for men and 45-52 percent for women by 2030.¹ Based on historic trends, by 2030 the United States would spend an additional \$66 billion a year on treating obesity-related conditions, while experiencing a loss in economic productivity as high as \$540 billion. According to a recent study in Health Affairs, current obesity-related medical costs total \$147 billion a year, or nearly 10 percent of all annual medical spending, based on 2006 data. However, if we are able to reduce average body mass index by five percent the United States would save \$29.8 billion in five years, \$158.1 billion in ten years, and \$611.7 billion in twenty years.

One important solution seems clear: preventing chronic diseases from happening. Over the next ten years, we have the opportunity to utilize the now \$12.5 billion in the Fund to invest in innovative programs that will help make healthy choices the easy choices for Americans. The remaining investment in the Prevention and Public Health Fund should be dedicated to new and transformative programs that will modernize our public health system, as they were intended to be under the ACA.


We hope you will work with us to ensure that the Prevention and Public Health Fund is not subjected to any further cuts, and is used as it was intended: to invest in transformative programs that will modernize our public health system, lower health costs and help create a long-term path to a healthier and economically sound America. This Fund has earned the support of more than 720 national, state and local organizations which recognize the importance of prevention (see attached list). Your strong public support is imperative.

Sincerely,

cc: United States House of Representatives

cc: United States Senate

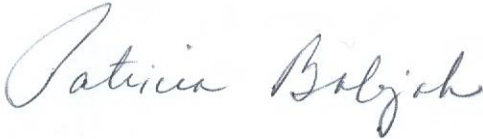
¹ Y Claire Wang, Kim McPherson, Tim Marsh, Steven L Gortmaker, Martin Brown. Health and economic burden of the projected obesity trends in the USA and the UK. *Lancet*. 2011: 378: 815-25.



Normandie Nigh
Chief Executive Officer
A World Fit for Kids!



Victor A. Barnes
Chief Executive Officer
AIDS United



Patricia M. Babjak
Chief Executive Officer
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



LeeAnn Hall
Executive Director
Alliance for a Just Society



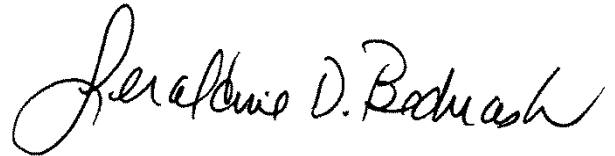
Lisa Simpson, MB, BCh, MPH
President and Chief Executive Officer
AcademyHealth



Robert W. Block, MD FAAP
President
American Academy of Pediatrics



William G. "Bill" Robertson
President and Chief Executive Officer
Adventist HealthCare, Inc



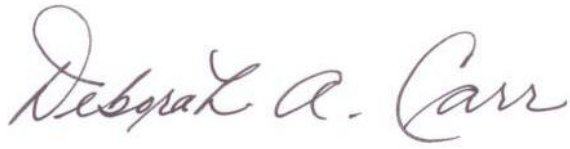
Geraldine "Polly" Bednash, PhD,
RN,FAAN
Chief Executive Officer and Executive
Director
American Association of Colleges of
Nursing



Carole S. Treston, RN MPH
Executive Director
AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth &
Families



Lucinda L. Maine, PhD, RPh
Executive Vice President and Chief
Executive Officer
American Association of Colleges of
Pharmacy



Deborah Carr
Executive Director
American Association of Poison Control
Centers



Mike Barry, CAE
Executive Director
American College of Preventive Medicine



Roberta Carlin
Executive Director
American Association on Health and
Disability



Larry Hausner
Chief Executive Officer
American Diabetes Association



John R. Seffrin, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
American Cancer Society Cancer Action
Network



Nancy A. Brown
Chief Executive Officer
American Heart Association | American
Stroke Association



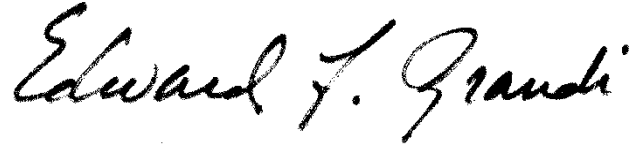
T. Warner Hudson, MD FACOEM, FAAFP
President
American College of Occupational and
Environmental Medicine



Gregory Miller
President
American Hiking Society



LaVarne A. Burton
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Kidney Fund



Edward Grandi
Executive Director
American Sleep Apnea Association



Charles D. Connor
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Lung Association



John H. Klippel, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Arthritis Foundation



Colin McCluney
Education & Advocacy Fellow
American Medical Student Association



Kathy Lim Ko
President and Chief Executive Officer
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health
Forum



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



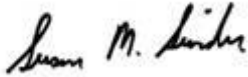
Lance Toma
Executive Director
Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center



Allison L. Lewis
Executive Director
Association for Prevention Teaching and
Research



Marcus Williams
President
Association of Black Cardiologists



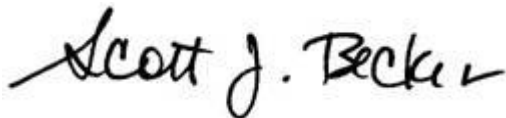
Susan Swider, PhD, APHN-BC
President
Association of Community Health Nursing
Educators



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



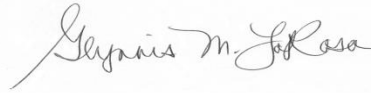
James Walker
President
Association of Population Centers



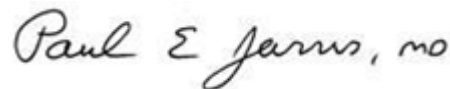
Scott J. Becker, MS
Executive Director
Association of Public Health Laboratories



Christine Wood
Executive Director
Association of State and Territorial Dental
Directors



Glynnis LaRosa, RN, MPH, CPHQ
President
Association of State and Territorial
Directors of Nursing



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



Robert Bernstein, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law



Matthew L. Myers
President
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids



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




Gerard M. Farrell
Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
Executive Director
Commissioned Officers Association of the
U.S. Public Health Service, Inc.



Victor Colman, JD
Director
Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition



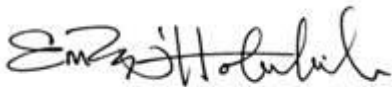
Vincent Lafronza
President
CommonHealth ACTION



Catherine Dunham
Executive Director
Children's Dental Health Project



Robert Restuccia
Executive Director
Community Catalyst



Emily J. Holubowich
Executive Director
Coalition for Health Funding



Debra Fraser Howze
Senior Vice President, Orasure
Technologies
Corporate Hepatitis Alliance



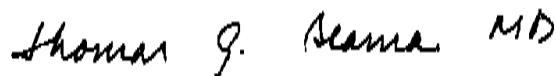
Linda P. Fried, MD, MPH
Dean and DeLamar Professor of Public
Health
Senior Vice President, Columbia University
Medical Center
Professor of Epidemiology and Medicine



Hrant Jamgochian
Executive Director
Dialysis Patient Citizens



Susan Goekler
Executive Director
Directors of Health Promotion and
Education



Thomas G. Slama, MD, FIDSA
President
Infectious Diseases Society of America



Bruce Menin
Executive Director
Disability Policy Consortium



William P. Gallagher Jr., DC
Director
INSPIREHealth.org



Alice Chen, MD
Executive Director
Doctors for America



Dr. Jennifer L. Howse
President
March of Dimes



Leslie Spencer
Interim Chairperson
Health Promotion Advocates



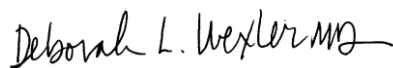
Harry MacMillan
President
MEND Foundation



Andrea Weddle
Executive Director
HIV Medicine Association



David L. Shern, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Mental Health America



Deborah L. Wexler, MD
Executive Director
Immunization Action Coalition



Rev. Dr. Nancy Wilson
Presiding Moderator
Metropolitan Community Churches

Julie Scofield
Executive Director
National Alliance of State & Territorial
AIDS Directors

Larry E. Naake
Executive Director
National Association of Counties

Linda Juszczak, DNSc, MPH, MS, CPNP
President
National Assembly on School-Based Health
Care

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

Patricia W. Potrzebowski, Ph.D.
Executive Director
National Association for Public Health
Statistics and Information Systems

Ron Manderscheid, PhD
Executive Director
National Association of County Behavioral
Health and Developmental Disability
Directors

John Robitscher
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Chronic Disease
Directors

Marie Fallon, EdD
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Local Boards of
Health

Matthew Lesieur
Vice President for Policy
National Association of People with AIDS

Susan Vaughn
Director of Public Policy
National Association of State Head Injury
Administrators

Linda Rosenberg
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Council for Community Behavioral
Healthcare

Hutson W. Inniss
Executive Director
National Coalition for LGBT Health

Eric Rodriguez
Vice President, Office of Research,
Advocacy, and Legislation
National Council of La Raza

Melissa Merson
Executive Director
National Coalition for Promoting Physical
Activity

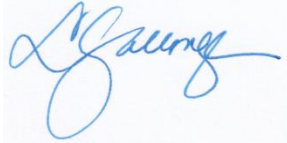
James Firman
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Council on Aging

William Smith
Executive Director
National Coalition of STD Directors

Mel Knight, REHS
President
National Environmental Health Association

John Rother
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Coalition on Health Care

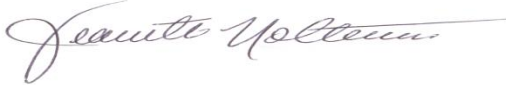
Keith Mason
Executive Director
National Forum for Heart Disease and
Stroke Prevention



Lark Galloway-Gilliam
Convener
National Health Equity Coalition



Barbara Tulipane
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Recreation and Park Association



Jeannette Noltenius, MA, PhD
National Director
National Latino Tobacco Control Network



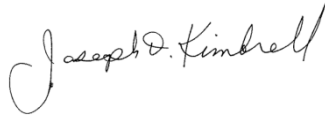
Martha Saly
Director
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable



David Chatel
Executive Vice President of Advocacy
National Multiple Sclerosis Society



The Rev. Douglas A. Greenaway
President and Chief Executive Officer
National WIC Association



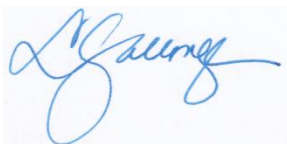
Joseph Kimbrell, MA, MSW
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Network of Public Health Institutes



Tine Hansen-Turton
Chief Executive Officer
National Nursing Centers Consortium



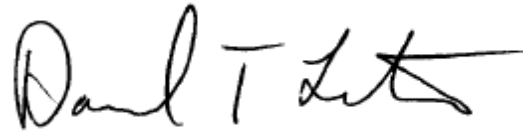
Debbie Chang, MPH
Vice President, Policy and Prevention
Nemours



Lark Galloway-Gilliam
Chair
National REACH Coalition



Astril Webb, MD
Director, Health and Family Services
Division
North American Management



Daniel T. Lichter
President
Population Association of America



Linda Bailey
President and Chief Executive Officer
North American Quitline Consortium



Hugh Parry
President and Chief Executive Officer
Prevent Blindness America



Michael Mawby
Chief Government Affairs Officer
Novo Nordisk



Carolyn Aldige
President and Founder
Prevent Cancer Foundation



Hardy Spoehr
Executive Director
Papa Ola Lokahi (Native Hawaiian Health
Board)



Danny Saggese
Chairman
Prevention Connections



Jud Richland, MPH
President and Chief Executive Officer
Partnership for Prevention



Larry Cohen, MSW
Founder and Executive Director
Prevention Institute



Ron Bialek
President
Public Health Foundation



Jeff Jordan
President and Founder
Rescue Social Change Group



Mary A. Pittman, DrPH
President and Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Institute



David Auxter
Director
Research Institute for Independent Living



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



Robert Valdez
Executive Director
RWJF Center for Health Policy



Ellen Rautenberg
President and Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Solutions



Deborah Hubsmith
Director
Safe Routes to School National Partnership



Kevin Mills
Vice President of Policy and Trail
Development
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy



Cindy Pearson
Co-Founder
Raising Women's Voices for the Health
Care We Need



Amber Williams
Executive Director
Safe States Alliance



John Santelli, MD, MPH
President
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine



Rev. Pat Bumgardner
Executive Director
The Global Justice Institute



Elaine Auld
Chief Executive Officer
Society for Public Health Education



Sam Blair
Network Director
The Main Street Alliance



Becky Vaughn
Chief Executive Officer
State Associations of Addiction Services



Harriette Fox
Chief Executive Officer
The National Alliance to Advance
Adolescent Health



Mickey Urdea
Chief Scientific Officer and Chairman
Tethys Bioscience, Inc.



Jan E. Patterson, MD, MS
President
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of
America



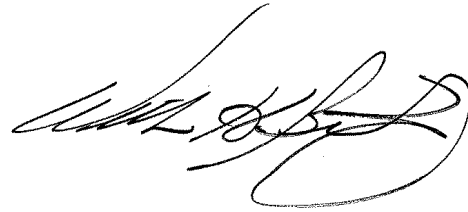
Peter V. Berns
Chief Executive Officer
The Arc of the US



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



Ed Foster-Simeon
President and Chief Executive Officer
U.S. Soccer Foundation



William H. Bentley
President and Chief Executive Officer
Voices for America's Children



Jeanne Blankenship
Chair
United States Breastfeeding Committee