

April 5, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwomen Murray and DeLauro and Ranking Members Blunt and Cole:

The undersigned 190 organizations and communities working to promote the health of all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, **urge you to provide at least \$102.5 million in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program.** More specifically, we request **\$75.5 million for CDC's REACH** grant program and **\$27 million for its affiliated program Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC)** to address the disproportionate impact of chronic disease on racial and ethnic populations in urban, rural and tribal areas.

The higher rates of hospitalization and mortality for COVID-19 patients with underlying chronic conditions underscore the importance of working toward a country where all can live healthier lives. Furthermore, the racial and ethnic disparities that characterize COVID-19 and obesity are a sharp reminder of the effects that underlying social and economic conditions and structures can have on the health and well-being at all individual, family, neighborhood, and national levels. Preventable diseases like diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, renal disease, and stroke in ethnic and minority populations cost the healthcare system \$23.9 billion annually and are expected to double by 2050. Investing in program such as REACH, with a history of tackling the root causes of chronic conditions using culturally and ethnically evidence-based approaches, presents a fiscally sound, strategic investment in enabling all communities, regardless of race or ethnicity, to achieve optimal health.

Currently in its 22nd year, REACH stands as a model CDC program using community-level strategies that are evidence based or evidence informed to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in chronic disease and related risk factors (i.e., tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity). **The impact across REACH communities from 2014- 2018 includes:**

- **Over 2.7 million people have better access to healthy food and beverages,**
- **Over 650,00 people have benefited from tobacco-free interventions,**
- **Approximately 1.3 million people have increased opportunities to be physically active; and**
- **Over 750,000 people have better access to new community-clinical linkages.**

We thank LHHS for funding REACH at \$63.95 million for FY2021, enough to support up to 40 communities. Although we are grateful for the support, it still falls short of being able to fund a program in communities in all

50 states and U.S. territories. Moreover, in the latest round of REACH applications, there were 261 approved but unfunded applications, showing the extraordinary demand and need at the community levels.

Additionally, REACH continues to prove its effectiveness in implementing chronic disease programming despite challenges due to funding and the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the demonstrated ability of REACH recipients to be trusted community messengers, CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases provided supplemental funding to REACH recipients to improve COVID-19 and flu vaccination confidence in racial and/or ethnic populations experiencing disparities in vaccination rates.

Since FY 2017, the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) grant program has worked with American Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages, tribal organizations, and Tribal Epidemiology Centers to promote health, prevent disease, reduce health disparities, and strengthen connections to culture and lifeways that improve health and wellness. Congressional funding in FY 2021 included \$22 million for GHWIC. However, funds from REACH that support GHWIC only fund 21 tribes directly and support other tribes by funding 15 Urban Indian Health Centers and 12 Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs). This program continues to support healthy behaviors in Native communities by supporting coordinated and holistic approaches to chronic disease prevention; continuing to support culturally appropriate, effective public health approaches; and expanding the program's reach and impact by working with more tribes and tribal organizations, including Urban Indian Organizations.

Therefore, we are urging Congress to fund at least \$102.5 million in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, including \$75.5 million to continue scaling to all states and U.S. territories and support grantees in building capacity for collaboration and disseminating evidence-based strategies in communities for the CDC REACH funding and GHWIC at \$27 million to expand Tribal Epidemiology Centers for Public Health Infrastructure and continue the program's important work.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request and your support for the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities to create a healthy and equitable future for all.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
ADAP Advocacy Association
Advocates for Better Children's Diets
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Heart Association (AHA)
American Kidney Fund
American Lung Association
American Public Health Association
American Sexual Health Association
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health

Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Baby Cafe USA
Berkeley Media Studies Group
Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands
Cancer Support Community
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Coalition of National Health Education Organizations
Collaborative Solutions, Inc.
Common Threads
CommonSpirit Health
Community Access National Network (CANN)
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Creighton University Omaha Nebraska
EECRC (Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural and Resource Center)
Endocrine Society
Eta Sigma Gamma
Evidence-Based Leadership Collaborative (EBLC)
Families USA
First Focus Campaign for Children
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
Health Resources in Action
Healthcare Leadership Council
Healthy Places by Design
Lakeshore Foundation
MomsRising
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Association for Health and Fitness
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Immigration Law Center
National Kidney Foundation
National Partnership for Women & Families
National REACH Coalition
People For the American Way
Prevent Blindness
Prevention Institute
Professional Association of Social Workers in HIV/AIDS
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Health Advocates
Public Health Foundation
Public Health Institute
RESULTS
Rise Up Solutions
Safe Routes Partnership
Schacht & Associates
Society for Public Health Education
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)

The Praxis Project
Trust for America's Health
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee
Unmarried, Single But Not Alone LLC
YMCA of the USA
YOUR Center

Local and State Organizations

AIDS Alabama
All Youth Access, LLC
Arboreta Group, LLC
Arizona Breastfeeding Coalition
Arkansas SOPHE
Asian Chamber of Commerce Incorporated (AZ)
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Health Coalition
Asian Media Access
Asian Pacific Community in Action
AZ AANHPI for Equity
California Center for Rural Policy at Humboldt State University
California State University, Fullerton, Center for Healthy Neighborhoods
CARE at Southern CT State University
Center for Health Innovation
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (WA State)
Children's Wisconsin
Christian Council of Delmarva
City of Lebanon
City of Miami Gardens - Live Healthy Miami Gardens
City of New Haven - Food System Policy Division
CitySeed
Clevelanders in Motion LLC
Community Welfare services of Metro Detroit
Colorado Association for School-Based Health Care
Community Alliance for Research & Engagement (CARE)
Community Health Council of Lebanon County
Community Health Councils
Community Memorial Health System
Domestic Violence Intervention of Lebanon County
Egg Geo, LLC
Elkhart County Health Department

Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural and Resource Center (EECRC)
Feed the Hood
FIRM (Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries)
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM)
Garrett Solutions LLC
Georgia Society for Public Health Education (GASOPHE)
Great Lakes Chapter of the Society for Public Health Education (GLC SOPHE)
Hawaii Public Health Association
Health Council of Southeast Florida
Healthy Savannah
Healthy Start, Inc.
Hunts Point Alliance for Children/Hunts Point Community Partnership
Illinois Society for Public Health Education
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness
Immunize Nevada
InSOPHE
Institute for Family Health
Jump IN for Healthy Kids
Just Harvest
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition
KCN
Korean Community Services of Metropolitan NY
Kentucky State Government- SPAN
Lanai Community Health Center
Lebanon Family Health Services
Lotus Healthcare
Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama
Marín Community Clinics
Michigan Public Health Institute
Midwife Center for Birth and Women's Health
Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition
Minnesota Society for Public Health Education
Montana Public Health Association
Mountain Passages
Multnomah County Health Department
National Capital Area Society of Public Health Education (NCA SOPHE)
National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)
National Kidney Foundation of Michigan
New Jersey Public Health Association
New Mexico Asian Family Center
Nutrition Policy Institute, University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources
NW IN Health Department Cooperative
OCA Greater Cleveland
Ohio Society for Public Health Education (Ohio SOPHE)
Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners
Operation Samahan, Inc. dba Samahan Health Centers

Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln
Penn State College of Medicine REACH
Phoenix International Consultants
Pittsburgh Food Policy Council
Project Open Hand
Public Health Institute of Western MA
Public Justice Center
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention
Respiratory Health Association
Riverside Community Health Foundation
RiverStone Health
Seneca Diabetes Foundation
Seneca Nation Health System
Society for Public Health Education Midwest Chapter
Solano Community Foundation
South Asian Network
South Los Angeles Health Projects
Southbay Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center
Southern Nevada Health District
SSCHC
Taulama for Tongans
Tennessee Justice Center
The Community Alliance for Research and Engagement
The Foundation for Sustainable Urban Communities
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
Tri-County Health Department
United Way of Lebanon County
University of Hawai'i System
University of Hawaii - John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Pittsburgh, Center for Health Equity
UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh
Utah Society of Public Health Educators (USOPHE)
Vermont Public Health Association (VtPHA)
Washington State Department of Health
Washington State Public Health Association
WelCore Health
Wildflower Consulting, LLC
Witnesses to Hunger New Haven
YMCA of Coastal Georgia