

Urge Public Health and Prevention as Essential Elements of Health Reform

May 13, 2009

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
2125 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Rangel
Chairman
Committee on Ways & Means
1102 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Barton
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
2322-A Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Camp
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways & Means
1139-E Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Waxman & Rangel and Ranking Members Barton & Camp:

As your committees craft and consider a health reform package, the more than 225 undersigned organizations urge you to ensure that public health and prevention are essential elements of such legislation. We hope that health reform can serve as an opportunity to strengthen our public health infrastructure and reorient our health system towards prevention and preparedness. In particular, we request that your proposals accomplish the following goals:

Create a renewed focus on public health by establishing a **National Prevention Strategy** that sets specific goals and objectives for improving the nation's health through federally-supported prevention programs. The National Prevention Strategy would be consistent with the Healthy People 2020 goals and would identify priorities for expenditures. It could also help promote public health across all federal agencies and foster inter-agency and inter-departmental cooperation regarding health issues.

Establish a **Public Health and Wellness Trust Fund** which could be funded through a mandatory appropriation or set-aside of a portion of new revenues generated through the financing of health reform. Resources from the Trust Fund would be allocated to specific public health programs or activities as directed by the appropriations committees funding for Function 550 public health programs. The Trust Fund would support expansion of public health functions and services that surround, support, and strengthen the health care delivery system. It would finance:

- The core governmental public health functions of assessment, assurance, and policy development at the federal, state, and local levels.

- Population-level non-clinical prevention and wellness programs, which can be delivered through governmental agencies and non-governmental agencies, including those programs that integrate community-based population prevention with systems of medical care. Programs would be evidence-based community prevention programs that target priority health outcomes as identified in the National Prevention Strategy.
- Clinical preventive services (such as screenings and immunizations) delivered in community settings or by health departments that are not covered by third party payers.
- Workforce training and development, as well as public health research.

In addition, health reform legislation should:

- Strengthen scientific research and ensure the dissemination of best practices as the foundation of evidence-based public health;
- Ensure that federal prevention and public health policy addresses health inequities and disparities;
- Improve health surveillance to enable tracking of critical health indicators and monitoring and evaluation of disease trends; and
- Ensure that investments in Health IT take into account the needs of public health; and incorporating public health emergency response

As you know, the U.S. currently spends more than any other nation in the world on health care, but we lag behind on key health indicators, such as life expectancy. We need to make a serious course correction and reorient our health system towards prevention. As you develop and debate health reform proposals, we urge you to prioritize prevention and public health.

Sincerely,

100 Black Men of Charleston, Inc. (SC)
 317 Coalition
 Access Community Health Network
 Access Institute
 Advocates for EMS
 AIDS Action Baltimore
 AIDS Action Council
 AIDS Foundation of Chicago
 AIDS Project Los Angeles
 ALERT Health
 Alliance for Healthy Homes
 All Saints Home Care and Referral Services
 Alzheimer's Family Organization (Florida)
 Alzheimer's Foundation of America
 Alzheimer's Foundation of Staten Island, Inc.
 (NY)
 Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area (Baton
 Rouge, LA)

American Academy of HIV Medicine
 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 of Colleges of Pharmacy
 American Association of Occupational Health
 Nurses
 American Association on Health and Disability
 American Association on Intellectual and
 Developmental Disabilities
 American College of Clinical Pharmacy
 American College of Occupational and
 Environmental Medicine
 American College of Preventive Medicine
 American College of Sports Medicine

American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Nurses Association
American Osteopathic Association
American Pediatric Society
American Psychiatric Association
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
American Social Health Association
American Society of Bariatric Physicians
American Thoracic society
amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research
Arthritis Foundation
Assembly on School-Based Health Care
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.
Association of Child and Maternal Health Programs
Association of Immunization Managers
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Schools of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Autism Society of America
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Black Women's Health Imperative
Brain Injury Association of America
Breathe California
Bridgeway Pointe Assisted Living in Cincinnati, Ohio
California Center for Public Health Advocacy
California Conference of Local Health Officers
California Food Policy Advocates
Campaign for Public Health
CANN - Community Access National Network
CardioVision 2020 (Minnesota)
Caring Days Adult Day Care, A Program of Caring Congregations (Alabama)

Center for Behavioral Research, School of Public Health, San Diego State University
Center for Biosecurity, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
Center for Cognitive Fitness & Innovative Therapies
Center for Communications, Health & the Environment
Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of MN
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Chenango Health Network (NY)
Cherokee Nation
Children's Dental Health Project
Children's Health Fund
CityMatCH
Cleveland Department of Public Health
Coastal Health District, Georgia
Commonweal (WA)
Community Health Councils
Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Institute
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (NY and RI)
Continuum Senior Care Management, Inc.
County Health Executives Association of California
Defeat Diabetes Foundation
Dementia Care Services, LLC (Texas)
Directors of Health Promotion and Education
Emergency Nurses Association
Environmental Health Watch
Epilepsy Foundation
Every Child By Two
Fall Prevention Center of Excellence
FamilyCook Productions
Family Voices
Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health - University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
First Focus
Fitness Forward
Flint Odyssey House, Inc Health Awareness Center (MI)
Georgetown County Diabetes CORE Group (SC)
Georgia District 2 Public Health
Georgia Public Health Association

Golden Gate Designs
Healthcare Consortium, Inc
Health District 3-1 (Georgia)
Health Education Network of Delaware
Health Promotion Research Center, University of
Washington
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hepatitis Foundation International
Hidalgo Medical Services (NM)
HIV Medicine Association
Home Safety Council
Housing Works
Howard University Center for Wellness and
Weightloss Surgery
Human Rights Campaign
Immunization Action Coalition
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Institute for Health and Productivity Studies,
Rollins School of Public Health, Emory
University
Institute of Public Health, Georgia State
University
InterAmerican Heart Foundation
International Health, Racquet & Sports Club
Association
Khmer Health Advocates, Inc
Lifelong AIDS Alliance (WA)
Louisiana Public Health Institute
Lutheran Family & Children's Services
March of Dimes Foundation
Massachusetts Public Health Association
Mental Health America
Michigan Department of Community Health,
Healthy Homes University Program
Nacogdoches Treatment Center – Alzheimer's
Day Activity Program (Texas)
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS
Directors
National Association for Public Health Statistics
and Information Systems
National Association of Chronic Disease
Directors
National Association of Community Health
Centers
National Association of Counties

National Association of County and City Health
Officials
National Association of Local Boards of Health
National Association of People with AIDS
National Association of RSVP Directors
National Association of School Nurses
National Association for Sport & Physical
Education
National Athletic Trainers' Association
National Birth Defects Prevention Network
National Coalition for Promoting Physical
Activity
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Environmental Health Association
National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke
Prevention
National Health Council
National Health Foundation
National Health Science Honor Society (Eta
Sigma Gamma)
National Hispanic Health Foundation
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Initiative for Children's Healthcare
Quality
National League for Nursing
National Medical Association
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Nursing Centers Consortium
National Nursing Network Organization
National Parent Teacher Association
National Recreation and Park Association
National Research Center for Women & Families
National Student Nurses' Association
National TB Controllers Association
National WIC Association
Nemours
Nevada Cancer Institute
New York Academy of Medicine
New York State Nutrition Council
Novo Nordisk
Pacific Center of Excellence in the Elimination
of Disparities
Partners for a Healthy Nevada
Partnership for Prevention
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine
Physicians for Social Responsibility

Pop Warner Little Scholars
Prevention Institute
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Project Lifesaver International (Virginia)
Public Health Foundation
Public Health Institute
Public Health-Seattle & King County
REACH US Lawndale Health Promotion Project,
Chicago Dept. of Public Health
Rebuilding Together
Research!America
Researchers against Inactivity-related Disorders
RI Lead Techs, Inc.
RWJF Center for Health Policy
SAGE Eldercare (New Jersey)
San Ysidro School District
Save the Children
Shaping America's Health
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Public Health Education
South Beach AIDS Project, Inc.
Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association
State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors
Association
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association
TAKE CHARGE!!! Lifestyle Management, Inc.
The Access Project
The AIDS Institute
The ARK, Adult Respite Kare and Alzheimer's
Family Support Services

The Midwest Latino Health Research, Training
and Policy Center at the University of Illinois at
Chicago
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent
Health
The National Coalition for LGBT Health
The National Nursing Network Organization
The New England Coalition for Health
Promotion and Disease Prevention
The Praxis Project
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of
America
Treatment Access Expansion Project
Treatment Action Group (IL)
Trust for America's Health
United American Nurses, AFL-CIO
United Fresh Produce Association
United States Water Fitness Association
United Way of America
U.S. PIRG
Visiting Nurse Associations of America
Washington Coalition for Promoting Physical
Activity
Washington Health Foundation-Healthiest State
in the Nation Campaign
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for
Women with Heart Disease.
Women's Sports Foundation
YMCA of Greater Cleveland
YMCA of the USA
YOUR Center (MI)