

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

March 11, 2016

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Representative Pallone:

On behalf of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and 2,800 local health departments, I write to express strong opposition to the elimination of the Prevention and Public Health Fund (the Fund) as included in the "Common Sense Savings Act of 2016" (H.R. 4725). The legislation would eliminate \$16.5 billion in future funding (FY2016-FY2025) for critical public health and prevention activities.

In six years, the Fund has invested nearly \$5.25 billion in resources to states, communities, tribal and community organizations to support community-based prevention of chronic and infectious disease. Currently, 13% of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) budget comes from the Fund with 96% of the Fund directed to CDC. A cut of this magnitude would cripple CDC. Furthermore, Congress has allocated the Fund in FY2014, FY2015, and FY2016 spending bills acknowledging the importance of the Fund in supporting core public health programs.

Decimating the Fund in this manner would dramatically impede federal, state and local efforts to improve health, including:

- **The Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) program**, which provides \$40 million to improve states' and directly funded cities' ability to detect, diagnose and contain disease outbreaks. The ELC program is critical in the midst of the Zika virus outbreak.
- **The Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant**, which provides 50 states, the District of Columbia, two American Indian tribes, and U.S. territories with flexible funding for state and local health departments. The Fund provides 100% of the funding for the block grant or \$160 million.
- **The Section 317 immunization program**, which supports state and local health departments for vaccine purchase for at-need populations and immunization program operations. The program is vital to preventing and responding to vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks, and building epidemiology and laboratory capacity in all states. The Fund provides 53% of the funding (\$324 million) for the 317 Immunization Program, which is 36% of CDC's Fund total.

Again, NACCHO and local health departments opposes the "Common Sense Savings Act of 2016" and any effort to repeal or cut the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Elimination of the Fund would hamper federal, state, and local efforts to protect the public's health. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



LaMar Hasbrouck, MD, MPH
Executive Director

