

August 21, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

As organizations dedicated to improving the health of all Americans, we write to express our strong support for funding the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division on Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity and oppose reducing funding across CDC through the proposed America's Health Block Grant.

Our national statistics on obesity and physical activity are alarming. Over the past 30 years, obesity rates have doubled in adults and tripled in kids. Nearly 70% of Americans are overweight or obese. Despite the known benefits of physical activity, one in three adults are active for less than 10 minutes/week. Furthermore, half of U.S. adults and three in four adolescents do not meet minimum recommended levels of physical activity for good health. Obesity costs \$270 billion a year. According to CDC, a 1% reduction in dietary health risks such as weight, blood pressure, glucose, and cholesterol risk factors would save up to \$100 per person per year in medical costs. Further, if every American met the levels of recommended physical activity, we could save \$117 billion per year in health care costs. Investing in obesity prevention and physical activity makes long-term sense for America's economy, productivity, national security and citizen's quality of life.

CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO) protects the health of Americans at every stage of life by encouraging regular physical activity, good nutrition, and preventing adult and childhood obesity. DNPAO supports healthy eating, active living and obesity prevention by creating healthy options in our nation's child care centers, schools, worksites, cities and communities. The division focuses on improving dietary quality to support healthy child development and reduce chronic disease; increasing physical activity for people of all ages; and decreasing prevalence of obesity through prevention of weight gain and maintenance of healthy weight. Within the CDC and across other government agencies, DNPAO staff currently

provide some of the best public health expertise in the world, along with research and consultation about the most evidence-based programmatic and policy approaches to create healthier environments that often produce a return on investment. Consolidation and funding reduction could lead to the loss of critical focus on key national issues around health and quality of life, physical fitness and physical activity, access to healthy foods, combating obesity and other chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.

DNPAO provides basic funding to all 50 states to promote the adoption of food service guidelines, nutrition standards and physical activity standards. However, one-third of the states are not receiving the level of resources provided to other states to prevent and control chronic diseases such as: improving access to healthy foods and drinks, providing and promoting safe places for physical activity, implementing nutrition and physical activity standards in early care and education centers, and supporting breastfeeding in friendly environments. Further, consolidating funding into a block grant and reducing the overall CDC budget will threaten these effective programs, national expertise will be compromised, evaluation to assess programmatic impact will be lost, and there will be an inability to measure progress across the nation.

DNPAO also collaborates with private industry to ensure health security and helps contribute to a healthy economy. For example, CDC developed the Worksite Health Promotion Scorecard, a tool designed to help employers assess whether they have developed and implemented science-based health promotion interventions in their worksites to prevent heart disease, stroke, and related health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and obesity. The CDC also developed food service guidelines for federal government agencies that are now being used by major corporations to improve healthy food access in worksites across the country. We can't afford to lose these important public/private collaboratives and the progress they have made.

We strongly support preserving and adequately funding CDC's Division for Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity and prevention funding across the CDC.

Sincerely,

Action for Healthy Kids
America Walks
American Association on Health and Disability
American Heart Association
American Physical Therapy Association
American Planning Association
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Healthy Weight Partnership
International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association
Lakeshore Foundation
MEND Foundation

MYZONE

National Association of Chronic Disease Directors

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

National Athletic Trainers' Association

National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity

National Council of Youth Sports

National Council on Strength and Fitness

National Fitness Foundation

National Physical Activity Plan Alliance

National Recreation and Park Association

Nemours Children's Health System

NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation

Public Health Institute

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Safe Routes to School National Partnership

SHAPE America

Smart Growth America

Society for Public Health Education

Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Trust for America's Health

Walk with a Doc

Zero Breast Cancer