



UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
**HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, & PENSIONS**  
RANKING MEMBER, SENATOR PATTY MURRAY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:**

[Madeleine Russak \(Murray\)](#): 202-224-5398

## **Murray Introduces Legislation to Build and Maintain Core Public Health Infrastructure Needed to Save Lives, Fight Threats Like COVID-19**

*Senator Murray introduces Public Health Infrastructure Saves Lives Act*

*Bill would establish a dedicated \$4.5 billion fund to build and maintain nation's public health infrastructure at every level*

*Senator Murray: "Public health infrastructure saves lives—and the better funded and prepared our public health system is before a crisis, the more lives it will be able to save during one."*

*Senator Murray: "We cannot afford to ignore this reality, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to devastate our communities."*

*Senator Murray: "We have to end the cycle of crisis and complacency when it comes to building and maintaining strong public health infrastructure."*

**(Washington, D.C.)** – This week, U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), ranking member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, and 18 of her Democratic Senate colleagues, introduced the Public Health Infrastructure Saves Lives Act (PHISLA). The legislation would establish a new core public health infrastructure program with \$4.5 billion in annual funding to bolster the nation's efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, and strengthen its ability to respond to other public health challenges going forward.

***“Public health infrastructure saves lives—and the better funded and prepared our public health system is before a crisis, the more lives it will be able to save during one. We cannot afford to ignore this reality, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to devastate our communities.***

***“Even as we stay focused on pushing for the bold investments we need to get out of this pandemic and help communities and families struggling in its wake, we have to apply the lessons we’ve learned and start thinking ahead now so we’re better prepared next time. We have to end the cycle of crisis and complacency when it comes to building and maintaining strong public health infrastructure. That’s why I’ve repeatedly pressed for more funding for public health—even as this Administration has repeatedly proposed cuts to public health and global health initiatives.***

***“The legislation I’m introducing would change this by establishing annual funding for the core public health efforts that are so critical to keep our nation safe. My bill would ensure committed investments for the CDC and public health agencies at every level so they can do the work necessary to protect our communities. This would allow them to strengthen core capabilities like disease surveillance, contact tracing, and communicating-science based information; help train and retain a skilled public health workforce; and fund efforts to improve health equity.***

***“After everything our country has been through this past year, there is no question we need this legislation urgently. We’re seeing real momentum for this from communities across the country who understand all too well how important it is for their safety that we have a strong public health system at every level. Public health hasn’t always been a partisan issue and it shouldn’t be here—in fact there are bipartisan voices outside of Congress calling for steps like this. Republicans need to listen to families, and turn their attention to working with Democrats on steps like this that will help us respond to this crisis and prepare for the next one.”***

PHISLA would establish a core public health infrastructure program to strengthen the country’s public health system—including the nation’s ability to respond to the COVID–19 pandemic—through grants to State, territorial, local, and Tribal health departments and increased investments at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The funding for the program would ramp up over five years to \$4.5 billion annually and then remain at that level, and the program would be aimed at specifically addressing eight core capabilities:

1. Public health assessment
2. Preparedness and response
3. Policy development and support
4. Communications

5. Community partnership development
6. Organizational competencies
7. Accountability
8. Equity

PHISLA was co-sponsored by: Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Bob Casey (D-PA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Ed Markey (D-MA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jack Reed (D-RI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Dick Durbin (D-IL).

PHISLA has been endorsed by over 50 organizations including: Washington State Department of Health; Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials; Public Health Seattle & King County; American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene; The Family Resource Network; Autism Family Services of New Jersey; Caregivers of New Jersey; Epilepsy Services of New Jersey; Epilepsy Alliance of America; Health Leadership Legacy Project; American Association of Health and Disability; Lakeshore Foundation; Delaware Academy of Medicine/Delaware Public Health Association; American Thoracic Society; American Society for Microbiology; Immunize Nevada; Nevada Public Health Association; Caring Ambassadors Program; Bipartisan Policy Center Action; Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum; Foundation for Healthy Generations; Global Liver Institute; Montana Public Health Association; Hope and Help; Association of Public Health Laboratories; Spina Bifida Association; National Association of County and City Health Officials; Trust for America's Health; New York State Public Health Association; Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids; Association of State and Territorial Health Officers; Prevent Blindness; American Heart Association; Safe States Alliance; Public Health Institute; Public Health Accreditation Board; HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute; Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health; Gerontological Society of America; Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.; Health By Design; Indiana Public Health Association; Alliance for Aging Research; Entomological Society of America; CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers; Wisconsin Public Health Association; Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards; New Jersey Public Health Association; American Clinical Laboratory Association; Association of State Public Health Nutritionists; American Lung Association; Association of American Medical Colleges; Prevention Institute; Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology; American Mosquito Control Association; National WIC Association; March of Dimes; American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees.

**[Read a summary of the Public Health Infrastructure Saves Lives Act \[HERE\]\(#\).](#)**

**[PDF of the full bill text \[HERE\]\(#\).](#)**

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