



September 21, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker McCarthy, and Leader Jeffries,

As Congress approaches the September 30 deadline to finalize its work on Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 without a continuing resolution, the Friends of the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) implore you to come to a bipartisan agreement that provides robust funding to critical federal statistics programs and keeps the federal government open and operating.

NCHS conducts research vital to our understanding of underlying health trends across the nation, and we are grateful given the challenging fiscal circumstances that the Senate Appropriations Committee approved \$187.397 million, an amount that will ensure that the agency has level funding for FY24. While this funding amount will not provide the agency with the increased resources needed to better meet the needs of policymakers, public health officials, researchers, and the American public, it will ensure the continuation of important programs, including the collection of vital records and execution of important population surveys like the National Health Interview survey and the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey.

A government shutdown could have drastic consequences for the work of NCHS. NCHS provides information on topics, including chronic disease prevalence, health disparities, teen pregnancy, infant mortality, maternal mortality, including racial inequities in maternal death rates, emergency room use, causes of death, and rates of insurance through a set of efficient, multipurpose data collection systems. A shutdown could harm our nation's ability to have up-to-date data that accurately reflects the current public health situation in the United States. Key stakeholders could be unable to access timely data, slowing critical decision making and hampering efforts to respond to public health challenges. Additionally, NCHS would need to make up for lost time following a shutdown, while also seeing a continual decrease in purchasing power that has not kept up with inflation.

While a long-term continuing resolution is not in the best interests of NCHS, a government shutdown will have a more unnecessary harmful impact on data collection and utilization efforts. We ask Congress to

work in a bipartisan manner to complete its work on FY 2024 and provide at least the \$187 billion approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee in a final conferenced bill. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Friends of NCHS Chair Steve Pierson at pierson@amstat.org or Vice Chair Meghan Riley at mriley@dc-crd.com.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. With your support NCHS will continue to shape our understanding of Americans' health with [objective, relevant, accurate, and timely information](#).

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
AcademyHealth
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Dental, Oral, and
Craniofacial Research
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association on Health and Disability
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American College of Obstetricians and
Gynecologists
American Heart Association
American Pediatric Society
American Society for Nutrition
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Association for Diagnostics and Laboratory
Medicine
Association of Maternal & Child Health
Programs
Association of Medical School Pediatric
Department Chairs
Association of Population Centers
Consortium of Social Science Associations

Council of Professional Associations on Federal
Statistics
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and
Brain Sciences
Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research
ICPSR, the Data Consortium
International Association of Coroners and
Medical Examiners
Lakeshore Foundation
March of Dimes
National Association for Public Health Statistics
and Information Systems
National Association of Medical Examiners
National Association of Pediatric Nurse
Practitioners
National Safety Council
Pediatric Policy Council
Population Association of America
Prevent Blindness
Safe States Alliance
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Women's Health Research
Well-Being and Equity in the World

Cc:

The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Susan Collins
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
The Honorable Kay Granger
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
The Honorable Robert Aderholt