

March 7, 2019

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Cole, Chairman Blunt, and Ranking Member Murray:

As organizations and communities working to ensure that healthy opportunities are available to all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, we are writing to urge you to include \$76.95 million in the final FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program. REACH is the only community health program funded by the CDC and is the only federal investment directly addressing racial and ethnic health disparities.

Racial and ethnic minority communities are disproportionately affected by chronic disease in America. Preventable diseases like diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, renal disease, and stroke in ethnic minority populations cost the healthcare system \$23.9 billion annually. These costs are expected to double by 2050. Investing directly in community coalitions with a history of tackling these issues allows the time and resources necessary to address the many root causes of racial and ethnic disparities and reverse the upward trend of chronic disease.

Health disparities, like the examples listed below, continue to rise and widen in communities due to poverty as well as other social, economic, and environmental factors. According to CDC and other health experts:

- Hispanics (47%) and non-Hispanic blacks (46.8%) had the highest age-adjusted prevalence of obesity, followed by non-Hispanic whites (37.9%) and non-Hispanic Asians (12.7%).
- American Indians/Alaska Natives had the highest prevalence of diagnosed diabetes for both men (14.9%) and women (15.3%). Overall, prevalence was higher among American Indians/Alaska Natives (15.1%), non-Hispanic blacks (12.7%), and people of Hispanic ethnicity (12.1%) than among non-Hispanic whites (7.4%) and Asians (8%).
- The rate of new cases of cervical cancer was highest among Hispanic women (9.4 per 100,00) and second highest among Black women (8.6 per 100,000).
- Chronic kidney disease is estimated to be more common in non-Hispanic blacks than in non-Hispanic whites (18% vs 13%).
- Asian Americans are 25% more likely, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are 3 times more likely, to be diagnosed with diabetes than non-Hispanic whites.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2020 indicators, and several of the recently proposed Healthy People 2030 objectives, are reflective of the work REACH programs are doing in communities across America. One of the five goals of Healthy People 2020 is to, "achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve the health of all groups."

The REACH program is singularly advancing community-level strategies that work to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in chronic disease and related risk factors. CDC currently funds 31 recipients to reduce health disparities among racial and ethnic minority populations with the highest burden of chronic disease (i.e., hypertension, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity) through culturally tailored interventions to address preventable risk behaviors (i.e., tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity). The REACH program continues to show measurable change in the health and wellbeing of racial and ethnic minority communities with the greatest burden of disease. A few key health outcomes include:

- From 2009 to 2012, smoking prevalence decreased 7.5 percent among non-Hispanic blacks and 4.5 percent among Hispanics.
- From 2001 to 2009, the percentage of Hispanics who reported having hypertension and were taking medication for it increased from less than half to more than two-thirds.
- From 2001 to 2009, pneumonia vaccination rates increased from 50.5 percent to 60.5 percent in black communities, from 46.0 percent to 58.5 percent in Hispanic communities, and from 67.3 percent to 78.7 percent in Native American communities.
- The prevalence of current smoking decreased dramatically among Asian American men in four REACH Asian communities; and these decreases were larger than nationwide decreases in smoking prevalence observed during the same period.

Despite the prevailing gains of the REACH program, Congress has not increased core REACH funding for many years, and since FY2017, REACH has been reduced in order to fund the valuable Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) program, which supports effective community-chosen and culturally adapted strategies to reduce the leading causes of chronic conditions, increase health literacy, and strengthen community-clinical links with American Indian/Native American populations. This is why we are urging Congress to restore REACH funding in FY 2020 and continue to fund GHWIC which requires a total allocation of \$76.95 million. We also ask Congress to ensure new funding goes to community organizations that qualified for REACH grants but were unfunded in the 2018 funding cycle, including organizations representing a diverse set of racial and ethnic minority groups.

We urge you to invest in these REACH and GHWIC communities to improve health outcomes and address disparities. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ACCESS Women's Health Justice
ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+)
African American Ministers In Action
African Family Holistic Health Organization
All Youth Access
American Association on Health and Disability
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Heart Association
American Kidney Fund
American Lung Association
American Muslim Health Professionals
American Public Health Association
Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Health Coalition
Asian Pacific Community in Action
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
Asian Resources, Inc.
Asian Services in Action, Inc. (ASIA)
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Baby Cafe USA
Bangladeshi American Public Affairs Committee
Basics Inc
Berean Wellness & Community Support Center
Boat People SOS
Bronx Health REACH
Bronx Westchester AHEC
CA4Health
California Center For Rural Policy
California Hepatitis C Task Force
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
Center for Health Innovation, New Mexico's Public Health Institute
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for Science in the Public Interest
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
ChangeLab Solutions
Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition
Childrens Vision Massachusetts Coalition
Church Alive Community Church
City of Miami Gardens
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Coalition for Disability Health Equity

Coalition on Human Needs
Community Catalyst
Community Health Councils
Community Welfare Services of Metro Detroit
Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
Consumer Health First
Creighton University
Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA
Cuyahoga County Board of Health
Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families
Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i
Equality California
Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural and resource Center
First Focus Campaign for Children
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries
G.O.A.L.S. For Women
Georgians for a Healthy Future
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
Groundswell at King of Glory Tabernacle
Guam Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program
Guam NCD Consortium
Guam Regional Medical City
Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center
Health Resources in Action
Healthy Asian Americans Project
Healthy Places by Design
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hep B United
Hep Free Hawai'i
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hispanic Health Initiatives, Inc.
Hogg Foundation for Mental Health
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness
Immunize Nevada
Impetus - Let's Get Started LLC
Improving Kids' Environment
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
International Association of Hepatitis Task Forces
International Nurses Society on Addictions (IntNSA)
John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii
Khmer Health Advocates, Inc.
Kokua Kalihi Valley
Korean Community Services of Metropolitan NY
Lakeshore Foundation
Lanai Community Health Center
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California
Lehman College, CUNY
Light and Salt Association

Lumos Transforms
Macomb Community Action
March of Dimes
Meharry Medical College
Micronesian Health Advisory Coalition
Mid-City CAN (Community Advocacy Network)
Minneapolis Health Department
Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition
MomsRising
Morehouse School of Medicine
Multnomah County Health Department
N. Montgomery Citizens United for Prosperity
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds
National Association for Health and Fitness
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People- Lubbock Chapter
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Black Justice Coalition
National Collaborative for Health Equity
National Consumers League
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Kidney Foundation of Michigan
National Minority Quality Forum
National REACH Coalition
National Recreation and Park Association
National Tongan American Society
National Urban League
National Women's Health Network
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Jersey Public Health Association
New Mexico Asian Family Center
National Minority AIDS Council
NOELA Community Health Center
NYU Langone Health
OCA Greater Cleveland Chapter
OSU Extension Service
People For the American Way
People Helping People Agency
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Prevent Blindness
Prevent Blindness Texas
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Prevention Institute
Public Health Advocates
Public Health Institute
Public Health Institute of Western MA
Public Justice Center

Raimi + Associates
Redstone Center
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention
RESULTS
RiverStone Health
Rights and Democracy of VT and NH
Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)
Society for Public Health Education
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
South Asian Network
South Los Angeles Health Projects
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center
Southern Nevada Health District
Specialty Pharmacy
SSG/PALS for Health
Summit Health Institute for Research and Education, Inc.
Taulama for Tongans
The Cambodian Family
The Center for Health innovation
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
The National Association of Community Health Centers
The Praxis Project
The Pride Center at Equality Park
Three Pyramids, Inc.
Trust for America's Health
UH John A. Burns School Of Medicine, Office Of The Dean
UnidosUS
University of Hawaii System
UsAgainstAlzheimer's
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee
Utah Pacific Islander Civic Engagement Coalition
Washington State Department of Health
West Michigan Asian American Association Inc
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition
Women's Mountain Passages
YMCA of the USA
YO MAMA LLC
Zero Breast Cancer