

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