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For more information:
Prevent Blindness
Sarah Hecker
(312) 363-6035
shecker@preventblindness.org

Prevent Blindness to Hold Fourteenth Annual “Eyes on Capitol Hill” Advocacy Event

***- National Consumer Advocate Group Dedicated to Healthy Eyesight
Gathers Delegates from Across the Country to Educate Policymakers on
the Importance of Supporting Vision and Eye Health Services -***

CHICAGO (June 27, 2019) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s oldest non-profit eye health organization, will be holding its fourteenth annual [“Eyes on Capitol Hill”](#) advocacy day on Tuesday, July 16, 2019, in Washington, D.C. The event brings together those who have been affected by vision issues with government representatives and their staff members, to discuss the importance of vision programs and funding requests that save sight. A reception for the [Congressional Vision Caucus](#) will be held the evening of this Capitol Hill event.

According to the recent Prevent Blindness study [“The Future of Vision: Forecasting the Prevalence and Costs of Vision Problems,”](#) vision impairments are projected to cost the United States \$167 billion in 2019, due in large part to the aging population. Yet, for every \$18,600 that vision problems cost the country, only a single dollar is allocated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) toward their prevention. Annual costs are projected to increase to \$717 billion by 2050 without significant investments in vision and eye health.

This year’s Eyes on Capitol Hill advocates will ask elected officials to:

- Invest \$5 million in funding for the [CDC’s Vision Health Initiative](#) to conduct much-needed surveillance.
- Maintain the CDC’s work in glaucoma prevention and awareness with \$4 million.
- Provide \$850 million to the [National Eye Institute \(NEI\)](#) at the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#).

“Vision and eye health play a direct role in a child’s healthy development and learning readiness, a working-age adult’s ability to be productive and remain healthy, and a senior’s ability to live independently,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent

Blindness. “By funding vision research, preventive services and basic healthcare needs today, we can actually save millions of dollars in the future.”

On Wed., July 17, all Eyes on Capitol Hill delegates will attend the eighth annual [Focus on Eye Health National Summit](#) at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

For more information on Eyes on Capitol Hill, the Congressional Vision Caucus reception, or Prevent Blindness and its advocacy initiatives, please call (800) 331-2020 or visit <https://www.preventblindness.org/advocacy-prevent-blindness>.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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