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## **Prevent Blindness to Hold Seventeenth Annual “Eyes on Capitol Hill” Advocacy Event**

***- Prevent Blindness annual event brings advocates from across the country together with elected officials to discuss vision and eye health issues, program funding to save sight -***

**CHICAGO (Feb. 25, 2022)** – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s oldest non-profit eye health and safety organization, will be holding its seventeenth annual [Eyes on Capitol Hill](#) advocacy day as a virtual event on March 1-2, 2022. Continuing its mission as a patient advocacy group, Prevent Blindness created the Eyes on Capitol Hill program specifically to provide patients, caregivers, allied personnel, and medical professionals direct access to their elected officials, in an effort to educate lawmakers and their staff on a variety of vision health issues, including vision health inequities, the need for improved vision surveillance, the impact of community eye health programs, and disparities in access to affordable eyecare services.

In addition to discussing personal stories, this year’s Eyes on Capitol Hill advocates will ask elected officials to:

- support a funding level of \$5 million in Fiscal Year 2023 for the Vision and Eye Health Budget Line, which provides federal funding for the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s \(CDC\) Vision Health Initiative](#). The CDC’s Vision Health Initiative (VHI) conducts national-level surveillance, engages in partnerships that promote early detection and connect people at high risk for eye diseases to eye care, and shares best practices with states and communities about incorporating vision and eye health into community-level interventions.
- maintain the current funding level of the CDC’s glaucoma program at \$4 million in FY2023. This funding will allow the CDC to continue glaucoma detection, referral, and treatment programs through community-level partnerships that have successfully reached high-risk and underserved populations and connected them to glaucoma care
- join the bipartisan, bicameral [Congressional Vision Caucus \(CVC\)](#), dedicated to strengthening and stimulating a national dialogue and policy on vision-related

problems and disabilities. The mission of the CVC is to raise awareness about the increasing number of Americans at risk for age-related eye diseases and those who face vision loss due to chronic disease.

Advocates will also ask Congress to pass a final Fiscal Year 2022 bill and include the proposed funding level of \$2 million to the VHI. A continuing resolution is set to expire on March 11.

“One of our most important events of the year, Eyes on Capitol Hill is essential to ensure that our policymakers are made aware of the significant impact that vision loss and blindness may have on the ability to succeed in the classroom, continue to work and live independently, as well as maintain mental health and quality of life,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “Through improved national surveillance methods, spread of effective community vision programs, and access to quality eyecare services and treatments, we can work together to help save sight in children, adults and seniors.”

For more information on Eyes on Capitol Hill, or Prevent Blindness and its advocacy initiatives, please visit [preventblindness.org/advocacy-initiatives/](https://preventblindness.org/advocacy-initiatives/).

### **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, visit us at [preventblindness.org](https://preventblindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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