



March 14, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
 Chairman
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
 Services, Education, and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations
 United States Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
 Ranking Member
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
 Services, Education, and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations
 United States Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As your Subcommittee moves forward with the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge you to increase funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) by \$100 million, for a total of \$310 million. This increase is needed to respond to soaring e-cigarette usage rates among youth and the devastating toll that tobacco continues to take on our nation's health.

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. Each year, it kills more than 480,000 Americans and is responsible for approximately \$170 billion in health care costs. Nearly

one in three heart disease deaths and cancer deaths and nearly eight in 10 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) deaths are caused by tobacco use.

We are at a critical juncture in the fight against tobacco use. After making tremendous progress in reducing youth tobacco use over the past several decades, e-cigarettes are threatening to undermine declines in youth smoking and overall youth tobacco use. Youth use of electronic cigarettes has skyrocketed in the United States, reaching what the FDA Commissioner and the U.S. Surgeon General have called “epidemic” levels. The 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS) showed that, between 2017 and 2018, current e-cigarette use increased by 78 percent among high school students and by 48 percent among middle school students. Driven by this surge in e-cigarette use, 27.1 percent of high school students reported current use of at least one tobacco product in 2018 – the highest rate in 14 years. At the same time, progress in reducing youth cigarette use has stalled. The high school smoking rate went from 7.6 percent in 2017 to 8.1 percent in 2018.

OSH has a vital role to play in addressing this serious public health problem. OSH provides grants to states and territories to support tobacco prevention and cessation programs, runs a highly successful national media campaign called Tips from Former Smokers (Tips), conducts research on tobacco use, and develops best practices for reducing it. Additional resources will allow OSH to address the new threat to public health posed by skyrocketing rates of youth e-cigarette use while continuing to prevent and reduce other forms of tobacco use. With additional resources:

- CDC could effectively respond to the new youth e-cigarette epidemic, including providing more resources to state and local health departments; educating youth, parents, health professionals and others about these products and the harms associated with their use; and identifying evidence-based strategies to protect kids.
- CDC could expand a program that we know works: the Tips media campaign. Between 2012 and 2015, Tips motivated over nine million smokers to make a quit attempt, helped over 500,000 smokers to successfully quit, and saved at least 50,000 people from premature death. Increasing the number of weeks Tips is on the air each year and the frequency with which the ads are run will help even more smokers to quit.
- CDC could strengthen efforts to assist groups disproportionately harmed by tobacco products. Despite the progress made in reducing tobacco use, certain populations and regions of the country continue to suffer substantially higher rates of tobacco use and tobacco-related disease and premature death. Targeted assistance would help address these disparities.

We appreciate your Subcommittee’s longstanding commitment to CDC’s tobacco use prevention and cessation programs. Investing in tobacco prevention and cessation will save lives and reduce the cost of treating tobacco-cause disease. For FY 2020, we urge you to increase funding for CDC’s OSH to \$310

million, which will enable CDC to address the new challenges posed by e-cigarettes while continuing to make progress reducing the death and disease caused by other tobacco products.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry
Action on Smoking & Health
Allergy & Asthma Network
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association for Dental Research
American Association for Respiratory Care
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Cardiology
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
American Society of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Thoracic Society
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Big Cities Health Coalition
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
ClearWay Minnesota
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
Counter Tools
Eta Sigma Gamma – National Health Education Honorary
Lung Cancer Alliance
March of Dimes
National African American Tobacco Prevention Network
National Association of County & City Health Officials
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Health Research
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Network of Public Health Institutes
Oncology Nursing Society
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Prevention Institute
Public Health Solutions
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
Society for Public Health Education
Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco
Students Against Destructive Decisions
The Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
Trust for America’s Health

CC: United States Senate Committee on Appropriations Members