

October 15, 2019

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

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

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As the Senate works to pass the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill and moves to Conference Committee with the House, the nearly 250 undersigned organizations are deeply concerned about the proposed elimination of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program. **We urge the Senate to match the House number of \$71.95 million in funding for the REACH program.** REACH is one of the only community health programs funded by the CDC that is dedicated to reducing chronic disease for specific racial and ethnic groups in urban, rural, and tribal communities with high disease burden.

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. A study by EA Finkelstein, et al, found that obesity alone increased annual medical expenses in the U.S. by \$149 billion. Investing directly in communities with a history of tackling these issues works upstream to address the root causes of racial and ethnic disparities and reverse the costly trend of chronic disease.

Currently in its 20<sup>th</sup> year, the REACH program is advancing community-level strategies that are evidence based or reflect promising practices that work to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in chronic disease and related risk factors. Current funding levels only allow CDC to support 31 recipients out of a total of 261 approved but unfunded applications, pointing to the high demand and need for this program. These 31 REACH recipients are working 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. **The impact across REACH communities from 2014-2018 includes:**

- **Over 2.7 million people have better access to healthy food and beverages**
- **Over 650,00 people have benefited from tobacco-free interventions**
- **Approximately 1.3 million people have increased opportunities to be physically active; and**
- **Over 750,000 people have better access to new community-clinical linkages**

Despite the prevailing gains of the REACH program, Congress has not increased core REACH funding for many years. Since FY 2017, REACH has been reduced in order to fund the creation of the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) grant 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 linkages with tribal communities. However, in order to fund the

creation of the GHWIC grant program, the core REACH grants had \$53 million diverted over the past three fiscal years.

**Therefore, we are urging Congress to restore REACH funding in FY 2020 and continue to fund GHWIC which requires a total allocation of \$71.95 million. We are thankful that the House recommended FY 2020 funding at \$71.95 million, a level that advocates consider a satisfactory minimum to get the program back on track. We also ask Congress to ensure new funding goes to community organizations that qualified for REACH grants but were unfunded in the FY 2018 funding cycle, including organizations representing a diverse set of racial and ethnic minority groups.**

As REACH celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary we urge Congress to invest in these REACH and GHWIC communities to improve health outcomes and address racial and ethnic health disparities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A World Fit for Kids!

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

ACCESS Women's Health Justice

ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+)

Advocates for Better Children's Diets

African American Ministers In Action

African Family Holistic Health Organization

Air Alliance Houston

Alameda CountyFirst 5

All Youth Access

America Walks

American Association on Health and Disability

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American Diabetes Association

American Heart Association

American Kidney Fund

American Lung Association

American Muslim Health Professionals

American Public Health Association

Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese

Arkansas Society for Public Health Education

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 Chinese Americans, Inc.  
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools  
Baby Cafe USA  
Bangladeshi American Public Affairs Committee  
Basics Inc  
Before and After Baby  
Berean Wellness & Community Support Center  
Boat People SOS  
Bronx Community Health Network  
Bronx Health REACH  
Bronx Westchester AHEC  
CA4Health  
California Center For Rural Policy  
California Hepatitis C Task Force  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands  
Cause Engagement Associates  
Center for Health Innovation, New Mexico's Public Health Institute  
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
ChangeLab Solutions  
Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition  
Children's Vision Massachusetts Coalition  
ChildWorks Education Consultants  
Chula Vista Partners in Courage  
Church Alive Community Church  
Cicatelli Associates Inc.  
City of Miami Gardens  
CLASP  
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families  
Coalition for Disability Health Equity  
Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Coalitions Work  
Community Building Institute  
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  
Duquesne University Center for Pharmacy Care  
Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i  
Equality California

Eta Sigma Gama  
Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural and resource Center  
Fairhill Partners  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Florida Community Health Worker Coalition, Inc.  
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  
Healing Virtue, LLC  
Health Care Systems Research Network  
Health Resources in Action  
Health by Design  
Healthy Asian American Project  
Healthy Places by Design  
Healthy Savannah  
Healthy Start, Inc. Pittsburgh  
Healing Virtue, LLC  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Hep B United  
Hep Free Hawai'i  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Hispanic Health Initiatives, Inc.  
Hogg Foundation for Mental Health  
Hope Whispers Community Organization  
Hunts Point Alliance for Children  
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness  
Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health  
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  
Kulich Youth Reproductive Health and Development Organization (KYRHDO)  
Lakeshore Foundation  
Lanai Community Health Center  
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California  
Lehman College, CUNY

Light and Salt Association  
Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust  
Lumos Transforms  
Macomb Community Action  
March of Dimes  
Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition  
MDavis Consulting LLC  
Meharry Medical College  
Micronesian Health Advisory Coalition  
Mid-City CAN (Community Advocacy Network)  
Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center  
Mind Health Connection a NJ Nonprofit Corporation  
Minneapolis Health Department  
Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition  
Miss Mother Nature Inc.  
MomsRising  
Montefiore Medical Center  
Morehouse School of Medicine  
Multnomah County Health Department  
N. Montgomery Citizens United for Prosperity  
NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
NAACP - Lubbock Chapter  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds  
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors  
National Association for Health and Fitness  
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  
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  
National WIC Association  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
New Jersey Public Health Association  
New Mexico Asian Family Center  
National Minority AIDS Council  
NOELA Community Health Center  
North Carolina Society for Public Health Education  
Northern California SOPHE  
NYU Langone Health

OCA Greater Cleveland Chapter  
Ohio Society for Public Health Education  
Palmer Drug Abuse Program of Ventura County  
People For the American Way  
People Helping People Agency  
Pittsburgh Food Policy Council  
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  
RAIN Oklahoma  
Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness  
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention  
RESULTS  
RiverStone Health  
Rights and Democracy of VT and NH  
Safe Kids Worldwide  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership  
San Fernando Community Health Center  
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)  
SHAPE America: Society for Health and Physical Educators  
Silver State Equality-Nevada  
Society for Public Health Education  
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education  
South Asian Network  
South Bay People Power  
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  
Thamara Labrousse  
The Cambodian Family  
The Campaign Against Hunger, Inc.  
The Center for Health innovation  
The Institute for Family Health  
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health  
The Pittsburgh Black Breastfeeding Circle  
The Praxis Project

The Pride Center at Equality Park  
Three Pyramids, Inc.  
Trust for America's Health  
UnidosUS  
University of Hawaii John A Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawaii System  
University of Massachusetts Medical School  
University of Memorial Health Care  
UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh  
UsAgainstAlzheimer's  
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee  
Utah Pacific Islander Civic Engagement Coalition  
Walk and Roll Berkeley  
Washington State Department of Health  
West Michigan Asian American Association Inc  
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition  
Women's Mountain Passages  
YMCA of the USA  
YWCA of Coastal Georgia  
YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
YO MAMA LLC  
YOUR Center  
Zero Breast Cancer