

November 29, 2016

The Honorable Pete Sessions
Chairman
House Rules Committee
H-312 Capitol Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Louise Slaughter
Ranking Member
House Rules Committee
1627 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Sessions and Ranking Member Slaughter:

On behalf of the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH), the voice of accredited academic public health, representing schools and programs accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), I am writing to voice our strong opposition to the provision in the 21st Century Cures Act that would use funding intended for the Prevention and Public Health Fund as a “pay-for” for other provisions in the bill.

According to the recent Congressional Budget Office scoring of the provision, it would eliminate \$3.5 billion in future funding (FY17-FY26) intended for critical public health and prevention activities.

ASPPH’s mission is to transform public health by strengthening and promoting the education, research, service, and practice activities of CEPH-accredited schools and programs. We advocate for investments needed to advance population health and more effective public health policies. In the first six years since its inception, the Prevention Fund has invested over \$6 billion in resources to states, communities, tribal and community organizations in support of community-based prevention, including tobacco use prevention, healthy eating and active living, as well as childhood immunizations and clinical prevention. Radically reducing the Prevention Fund in the manner proposed in the 21st Century Cures Act would dramatically impede efforts underway to improve population health.

Reducing the scheduled funding for the Prevention Fund would set back public health and would slash life-saving investments in every state that are desperately needed. For example, chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, and stroke are now responsible for seven out of 10 deaths and account for 86 percent of health care spending in America. While to goals of the 21st Century Cures Act are to ameliorate disease, it

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should not come at the cost of prevention. Such a short-sighted strategy may in fact have the opposite effect – more illness and disease and increased future health care spending.

We strongly urge you to oppose efforts to use the Prevention and Public Health Fund as a “pay-for” for other provisions in the 21st Century Cures Act.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Mazzaschi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anthony J. Mazzaschi
Senior Director, Policy and Research