

March 22, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Aderholt and Baldwin and Ranking Members DeLauro and Capito:

The undersigned public health, environmental health and other supporting organizations write to you to express our support for increased funding for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Environmental Health in the FY 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

As Congress moves forward with the appropriations process for FY 2024, we urge you to provide \$420.85 million to NCEH to ensure all of its programs are adequately funded. This funding will help ensure the center can work to strengthen and expand its programs including:

- Improving environmental health surveillance by expanding the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network to a true nationwide network. Current funding only allows the program to provide funding to 33 state and local health departments.
- Expanding critically underfunded childhood lead poisoning prevention activities by increasing funding for CDC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program which will allow CDC to provide grants to all 50 states and currently funded localities for surveillance to determine the extent of childhood lead poisoning, as well as educate the public and health care providers about lead poisoning, and ensure that lead-exposed children received needed medical and environmental follow-up services.
- Expanding the National Biomonitoring Network by providing additional resources to increase the number of states that can undertake state population-based biomonitoring surveillance. Communities continue to express concern about exposure to chemicals in our everyday lives and during environmental emergencies, yet we are often unable to provide data about these exposures at the state and local level.

- Strengthening and expanding funding to additional states under the National Asthma Control Program that tracks asthma prevalence, promotes asthma control and prevention and builds capacity in state programs. It is estimated that more than 25 million Americans currently have asthma, including more than 4.2 million children. The program has been highly effective: the rate of asthma has increased, yet asthma mortality and morbidity rates have decreased.
- Expanding the Climate and Health Program that currently funds nine states, two cities and three tribes to help diagnose and prepare for the serious adverse health impacts of climate change including extreme heat, more severe weather, floods, droughts, increases in air pollution and pollen and the spread of infectious and vector-borne diseases – such as Lyme disease and dengue fever. Increased funding will allow CDC to implement a 50 state program, provide support to additional tribes, territories, cities and counties and help to identify which interventions most effectively protect the public from the negative health effects of climate change.
- Supporting CDC and health departments to conduct cancer studies across the nation using CDC’s guidelines. Increased funding at NCEH will also support and expand laboratory studies into the human health impacts of exposure to hazardous substances and expand our understanding of which exposures may cause or contribute to the development of different cancers in the population.

Increasing our investments in environmental health prevention activities today will help reduce illness, disease, injury, health disparities and even death. Relying solely on our health care system to tackle the dangerous problems – dirty air and water, toxic substances, lead poisoning, climate change and extreme weather and many other environmental hazards – that occur outside the walls of the clinic is a costly and ineffective solution. However, adequate investments today and into the future in core environmental health activities can be a critical down payment on health, productivity and happiness of countless Americans. We thank you for considering this recommendation of \$420.85 million for NCEH and we look forward to working with you as you move forward with the FY 2024 appropriations process.

Please contact Don Hoppert at donald.hoppert@apha.org or 202-777-2514 with any questions regarding our request.

Sincerely,

Allergy & Asthma Network
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Physicians
American Lung Association
American Public Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Big Cities Health Coalition
Children's Environmental Health Network
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Entomological Society of America
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
March of Dimes
Medical Students for a Sustainable Future
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Environmental Health Association
National League for Nursing
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National WIC Association
Prevention Institute
The Alliance of Nurse for Healthy Environments
Trust for America's Health