

April 5, 2021

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

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

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwomen Murray and DeLauro and Ranking Members Blunt and Cole:

The undersigned 190 organizations and communities working to promote the health of all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, **urge you to provide at least \$102.5 million in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program.** More specifically, we request **\$75.5 million for CDC's REACH** grant program and **\$27 million for its affiliated program Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC)** to address the disproportionate impact of chronic disease on racial and ethnic populations in urban, rural and tribal areas.

The higher rates of hospitalization and mortality for COVID-19 patients with underlying chronic conditions underscore the importance of working toward a country where all can live healthier lives. Furthermore, the racial and ethnic disparities that characterize COVID-19 and obesity are a sharp reminder of the effects that underlying social and economic conditions and structures can have on the health and well-being at all individual, family, neighborhood, and national levels. Preventable diseases like diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, renal disease, and stroke in ethnic and minority populations cost the healthcare system \$23.9 billion annually and are expected to double by 2050. Investing in program such as REACH, with a history of tackling the root causes of chronic conditions using culturally and ethnically evidence-based approaches, presents a fiscally sound, strategic investment in enabling all communities, regardless of race or ethnicity, to achieve optimal health.

Currently in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year, REACH stands as a model CDC program using community-level strategies that are evidence based or evidence informed to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in chronic disease and related risk factors (i.e., tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity). **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.**

We thank LHHS for funding REACH at \$63.95 million for FY2021, enough to support up to 40 communities. Although we are grateful for the support, it still falls short of being able to fund a program in communities in all

50 states and U.S. territories. Moreover, in the latest round of REACH applications, there were 261 approved but unfunded applications, showing the extraordinary demand and need at the community levels.

Additionally, REACH continues to prove its effectiveness in implementing chronic disease programming despite challenges due to funding and the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the demonstrated ability of REACH recipients to be trusted community messengers, CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases provided supplemental funding to REACH recipients to improve COVID-19 and flu vaccination confidence in racial and/or ethnic populations experiencing disparities in vaccination rates.

Since FY 2017, the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) grant program has worked with American Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages, tribal organizations, and Tribal Epidemiology Centers to promote health, prevent disease, reduce health disparities, and strengthen connections to culture and lifeways that improve health and wellness. Congressional funding in FY 2021 included \$22 million for GHWIC. However, funds from REACH that support GHWIC only fund 21 tribes directly and support other tribes by funding 15 Urban Indian Health Centers and 12 Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs). This program continues to support healthy behaviors in Native communities by supporting coordinated and holistic approaches to chronic disease prevention; continuing to support culturally appropriate, effective public health approaches; and expanding the program's reach and impact by working with more tribes and tribal organizations, including Urban Indian Organizations.

**Therefore, we are urging Congress to fund at least \$102.5 million in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, including \$75.5 million to continue scaling to all states and U.S. territories and support grantees in building capacity for collaboration and disseminating evidence-based strategies in communities for the CDC REACH funding and GHWIC at \$27 million to expand Tribal Epidemiology Centers for Public Health Infrastructure and continue the program's important work.**

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request and your support for the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities to create a healthy and equitable future for all.

Sincerely,

### **National Organizations**

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
ADAP Advocacy Association  
Advocates for Better Children's Diets  
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American Heart Association (AHA)  
American Kidney Fund  
American Lung Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Sexual Health Association  
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health

Association of State Public Health Nutritionists  
Baby Cafe USA  
Berkeley Media Studies Group  
Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands  
Cancer Support Community  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Coalition of National Health Education Organizations  
Collaborative Solutions, Inc.  
Common Threads  
CommonSpirit Health  
Community Access National Network (CANN)  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Creighton University Omaha Nebraska  
EECRC (Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural and Resource Center)  
Endocrine Society  
Eta Sigma Gamma  
Evidence-Based Leadership Collaborative (EBLC)  
Families USA  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality  
Health Resources in Action  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
Healthy Places by Design  
Lakeshore Foundation  
MomsRising  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Association for Health and Fitness  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Kidney Foundation  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National REACH Coalition  
People For the American Way  
Prevent Blindness  
Prevention Institute  
Professional Association of Social Workers in HIV/AIDS  
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)  
Public Health Advocates  
Public Health Foundation  
Public Health Institute  
RESULTS  
Rise Up Solutions  
Safe Routes Partnership  
Schacht & Associates  
Society for Public Health Education  
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)

The Praxis Project  
Trust for America's Health  
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee  
Unmarried, Single But Not Alone LLC  
YMCA of the USA  
YOUR Center

### **Local and State Organizations**

AIDS Alabama  
All Youth Access, LLC  
Arboreta Group, LLC  
Arizona Breastfeeding Coalition  
Arkansas SOPHE  
Asian Chamber of Commerce Incorporated (AZ)  
Asian Counseling and Referral Service  
Asian Health Coalition  
Asian Media Access  
Asian Pacific Community in Action  
AZ AANHPI for Equity  
California Center for Rural Policy at Humboldt State University  
California State University, Fullerton, Center for Healthy Neighborhoods  
CARE at Southern CT State University  
Center for Health Innovation  
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY  
Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (WA State)  
Children's Wisconsin  
Christian Council of Delmarva  
City of Lebanon  
City of Miami Gardens - Live Healthy Miami Gardens  
City of New Haven - Food System Policy Division  
CitySeed  
Clevelanders in Motion LLC  
Community Welfare services of Metro Detroit  
Colorado Association for School-Based Health Care  
Community Alliance for Research & Engagement (CARE)  
Community Health Council of Lebanon County  
Community Health Councils  
Community Memorial Health System  
Domestic Violence Intervention of Lebanon County  
Egg Geo, LLC  
Elkhart County Health Department

Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural and Resource Center (EECRC)  
Feed the Hood  
FIRM (Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries)  
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM)  
Garrett Solutions LLC  
Georgia Society for Public Health Education (GASOPHE)  
Great Lakes Chapter of the Society for Public Health Education (GLC SOPHE)  
Hawaii Public Health Association  
Health Council of Southeast Florida  
Healthy Savannah  
Healthy Start, Inc.  
Hunts Point Alliance for Children/Hunts Point Community Partnership  
Illinois Society for Public Health Education  
Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness  
Immunize Nevada  
InSOPHE  
Institute for Family Health  
Jump IN for Healthy Kids  
Just Harvest  
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
KCN  
Korean Community Services of Metropolitan NY  
Kentucky State Government- SPAN  
Lanai Community Health Center  
Lebanon Family Health Services  
Lotus Healthcare  
Low Income Housing Coalition of Alabama  
Marín Community Clinics  
Michigan Public Health Institute  
Midwife Center for Birth and Women's Health  
Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition  
Minnesota Society for Public Health Education  
Montana Public Health Association  
Mountain Passages  
Multnomah County Health Department  
National Capital Area Society of Public Health Education (NCA SOPHE)  
National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)  
National Kidney Foundation of Michigan  
New Jersey Public Health Association  
New Mexico Asian Family Center  
Nutrition Policy Institute, University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
NW IN Health Department Cooperative  
OCA Greater Cleveland  
Ohio Society for Public Health Education (Ohio SOPHE)  
Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners  
Operation Samahan, Inc. dba Samahan Health Centers

Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln  
Penn State College of Medicine REACH  
Phoenix International Consultants  
Pittsburgh Food Policy Council  
Project Open Hand  
Public Health Institute of Western MA  
Public Justice Center  
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention  
Respiratory Health Association  
Riverside Community Health Foundation  
RiverStone Health  
Seneca Diabetes Foundation  
Seneca Nation Health System  
Society for Public Health Education Midwest Chapter  
Solano Community Foundation  
South Asian Network  
South Los Angeles Health Projects  
Southbay Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance  
Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center  
Southern Nevada Health District  
SSCHC  
Taulama for Tongans  
Tennessee Justice Center  
The Community Alliance for Research and Engagement  
The Foundation for Sustainable Urban Communities  
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health  
Tri-County Health Department  
United Way of Lebanon County  
University of Hawai'i System  
University of Hawaii - John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Pittsburgh, Center for Health Equity  
UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh  
Utah Society of Public Health Educators (USOPHE)  
Vermont Public Health Association (VtPHA)  
Washington State Department of Health  
Washington State Public Health Association  
WelCore Health  
Wildflower Consulting, LLC  
Witnesses to Hunger New Haven  
YMCA of Coastal Georgia