

May 26, 2022

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 Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

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

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

As Congress works to draft the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations legislation for FY 2023, the 80 undersigned organizations request that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) be funded at \$153 million for its Social Determinants of Health program – in line with President Biden's FY 2023 request. We sincerely thank Labor-HHS for providing an increase for the program in FY 2022 for a total of \$8 million. The undersigned organizations ask Labor-HHS to build upon this promising investment to ensure that public health departments, academic institutions, and nonprofit organizations are properly supported to address the social determinants of health in their communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how a community's resources directly impact the health of its residents. Unsafe or unstable housing, income insecurity, food insecurity, lack of transportation, and underlying health inequities put some populations at higher risk during the pandemic. People at disproportionate risk for serious health impacts from COVID-19 are also more likely to suffer secondary consequences, such as loss of income or lack of access to health care. Now more than ever it is important to address the social, economic, and environmental conditions, including housing, employment, food security, transportation, and education, that contribute significantly to an individual's health outcomes over their lifetime and community health at-large. These conditions, collectively referred as the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), are estimated to contribute 80-90% to a person's health outcomes, while traditional healthcare only accounts for 10-20%.¹

Yet, while clinicians can identify non-medical social needs and make referrals to community-based and social service organizations, they cannot ensure that there are adequate resources and policies

¹ <https://nam.edu/social-determinants-of-health-101-for-health-care-five-plus-five/>

in place to meet the needs of patients on their own. Healthcare is most effective when it can extend its work by working with other sectors. Public health departments and community organizations are uniquely situated to build these collaborations across sectors, identify SDOH priorities in communities, and help address policies that inhibit health. For example, while the healthcare system can offer in-house social services assistance at a clinical site, a public health department can complement those efforts by convening community organizations and partners to promote clinic-to-community linkages, advocate for SDOH-related reimbursement, and develop community resource materials.

However, most local, state, tribal, and territorial health and community agencies lack funding and tools to support these cross-sector efforts and are limited in doing so by disease-specific federal funding. Given appropriate funding and technical assistance, more communities could engage in opportunities to address social determinants of health that contribute to high healthcare costs and preventable inequities in health outcomes.

To build the evidence base for future SDOH work, CDC evaluated existing multi-sector coalitions that are working to advance health equity through SDOH-centered solutions. In a first-year evaluation, CDC found that of 42 SDOH community partnerships evaluated, 90% of them contributed to community changes that promote healthy living. Of the 29 partnerships that reported health outcomes data, their programs are projected to save \$566 million in medical and productivity costs over 20 years.²

A healthier, more resilient population and stronger economy require us to prevent and control health conditions that raise health care costs and put lives at risk. We thank you for your leadership in FY 2022 and your consideration of our FY 2023 request to continue building up CDC's SDOH program. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Madison West, Associate Government Relations Manager at Trust for America's Health at mwest@tfah.org.

Sincerely,

² <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/programs-impact/sdoh/pdf/GFF-eval-brief-508.pdf>

American Association of Heart Failure Nurses
AcademyHealth
Accountable Health, LLC
AIDS Alabama
Aligning for Health
America Walks
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association on Health and Disability
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Heart Association
American Kidney Fund
American Lung Association
American Physical Therapy Association
American Public Health Association
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Big Cities Health Coalition
Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin
CA Black Health Network
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
Cardiometabolic Research Institute
Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of Elders
Center for Biological Diversity
Coalition for Headache and Migraine Patients
Common Threads
Endocrine Society
Epilepsy Foundation
Equality California
Foundation for Health Care Quality
Habilitative Systems, Inc.
Health by Design
Healthcare Leadership Council
Hogg Foundation for Mental Health
Indiana Public Health Association
Integrative Health Policy Consortium
Lakeshore Foundation
Maine Public Health Association
MaryCatherine Jones Consulting, LLC
Maternal and Child Health Access
Miles for Migraine

National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association for Public Health Policy
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Immigration Law Center
National League for Nursing
National League of Cities
National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
New Jersey Public Health Association
New York State Public Health Association
Partnership for Southern Equity
Partnership to End Addiction
Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation
Public Health Foundation
Public Health Solutions
Red Star International, Inc.
Revitalize Community Development Corporation
Rhode Island Executive Office of Health & Human Services
RMC Health
Silver State Equality-Nevada
SLM Consulting, LLC
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
The Center for Community Resilience
The Consortium
The Foundation for Sustainable Communities
The Gerontological Society of America
The Health Care Improvement Foundation, Inc.
The Praxis Project
Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc.
Trinity Health
United Way of the Lakelands
Voices of Hope, Inc.
Washington State Public Health Association
YMCA of the USA