



March 23, 2023

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
 Chair
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human
 Services, Education and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations
 U.S. Senate
 Washington, DC

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
 Ranking Member
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human
 Services, Education and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations
 U.S. Senate
 Washington, DC

Dear Chair Baldwin and Ranking Member Capito:

Chronic diseases represent 7 of the 10 leading causes of death,¹ and are the leading drivers of the nation's \$4.1 trillion in annual health care costs.² Most of these chronic diseases can be prevented by activities such as eating well, being physically active, avoiding tobacco and excessive drinking, avoiding injury, healthy sleep, and getting regular health screenings. As Congress works to draft the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2024, the 53 undersigned organizations request **\$11.581 billion for the Centers for Disease**

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Leading causes of death](#). *Mortality in the United States, 2021*. Accessed online March 2023.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/programs-impact/pop/index.htm>

Control and Prevention (CDC) which, together with its National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), works to prevent chronic diseases and promote health and wellness for all in communities throughout the nation.

Together, our organizations represent the 6 in 10 people in America—millions of patients and consumers—who face serious, acute, and chronic health conditions.³ We have a unique perspective on what individuals and families need to prevent disease, cure illness, and manage chronic health conditions. We all agree there is ample evidence, both scientific and experiential, that:

- The United States has failed to adequately and consistently prioritize funding for the prevention of chronic diseases and conditions and the promotion of health and well-being.
- This failure has made our nation more vulnerable to severe illness and death from infectious disease.
- The exorbitant and increasing cost of the nation’s “sick care” system, including Medicare, is not sustainable for individuals, families, communities, employers, and policymakers.
- This challenge is surmountable and reversible with sufficient investment in upstream strategies that help make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Indeed, the burden of chronic disease is growing faster than our ability to ease it, putting an increasing strain on the health care system, health care costs, our productivity, educational outcomes, military readiness, and well-being.⁴ A robust CDC and NCCDPHP are essential to mitigating the increasing threat that chronic diseases pose to individuals living in America—including rising rates of obesity, tobacco use, alcohol use, and sedentary behavior. A robust investment, appropriate to the magnitude of the problem, will allow CDC and NCCDPHP to fulfill its mission by expanding the current patchwork of existing programs to all jurisdictions nationwide and address emerging health challenges.

As the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated, chronic diseases and infectious diseases are inextricably linked. Indeed, in the absence of vaccines, good underlying health is the best way to prevent severe infection and death from communicable diseases. Therefore, any efforts to improve prevent the spread of infectious disease must also include efforts to prevent chronic disease. A sustained investment in CDC and its NCCDPHP is essential to that goal—one we cannot afford to set aside if we are to preserve Americans’ health, well-being, productivity, and longevity.

We thank you for your consideration of our request, and we look forward to working with you to improve and protect health. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Emily Holubowich (American Heart Association) at emily.holubowich@heart.org or Erika Sward (American Lung Association) at erika.sward@lung.org.

Sincerely,

Accessia Health
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Kidney Fund

³ Buttorff C, Ruder T, Bauman M. Multiple Chronic Conditions in the United States. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corp.; 2017

⁴ Heidenreich PA, Trogon JG, Khavjou OA, et al. Forecasting the future of cardiovascular disease in the United States: a policy statement from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2011;123:933-944.

American Liver Foundation
American Lung Association
Arthritis Foundation
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
BDSRA Foundation
Child Neurology Foundation
Choose Healthy Life
Coalition of Skin Diseases
CURE Epilepsy
Dravet Syndrome Foundation
Digestive Disease National Coalition
Epilepsy Alliance America
Epilepsy Foundation
Epilepsy Leadership Council
GBS | CIDP Foundation International
Gaucher Community Alliance
Good Days
Hope Charities
International Foundation for CDKL5 Research
Interstitial Cystitis Association
JDRF
Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome (LGS) Foundation
Livestrong
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
Lymphatic Education & Research Network
METAvivor
National Alopecia Areata Foundation
National Eczema Association
National Kidney Foundation
National Pancreas Foundation
National Scleroderma Foundation
NephCure Kidney International
Platelet Disorder Support Association
Prevent Blindness
Project Sleep
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Rare Epilepsy Network (REN)
Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation
Sjögren's Foundation
The Mended Hearts, Inc.
TSC Alliance
United Ostomy Associations of America
UsAgainstAlzheimer's
U.S. Hereditary Angiodema Association
U.S. Pain Foundation
YMCA of the USA
wAIHA Warriors
WomenHeart