



March 22, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

ALAMEDA COUNTY (OAKLAND)

BALTIMORE CITY

BOSTON

CHICAGO

CLEVELAND

DALLAS COUNTY

DENVER

DETROIT

FULTON COUNTY (ATLANTA)

HOUSTON

KANSAS CITY

LONG BEACH

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

MARICOPA COUNTY (PHOENIX)

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY (MIAMI)

MINNEAPOLIS

MULTNOMAH COUNTY (PORTLAND)

NEW YORK CITY

PHILADELPHIA

SACRAMENTO

SAN ANTONIO

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

SAN FRANCISCO

SANTA CLARA COUNTY (SAN JOSE)

SEATTLE - KING COUNTY

SOUTHERN NV (LAS VEGAS)

TARRANT COUNTY (FORT WORTH)

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) respectfully requests your continued support for vital public health programs currently funded through the Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF). BCHC is a forum for the leaders of America's largest metropolitan health departments to exchange strategies and jointly address issues to promote and protect the health and safety of their residents. Collectively, BCHC member jurisdictions directly impact more than 54 million people, or one in six Americans.

Losing the long-standing public health programs that are currently in jeopardy due to elimination of the PPHF in the American Healthcare Act (AHCA) under consideration in the House of Representatives would be devastating for our 28 large, urban health departments – and to the nation as a whole.

Among the programs at risk at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are the 317 Immunization Program, Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Grants, Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention program, and Diabetes Prevention program, among others. The PPHF provides vital resources to governmental public health at all levels, and its elimination will further erode our fragile public health system. Investments that prevent people from getting sick, such as those outlined above, are critical components to reducing health care costs.

Ending funding for Medicaid expansion in 32 states by FY2020 – dollars that have provided access to primary and emergency health care to millions of Americans – will be disastrous to communities across the country. The proposed caps for federal Medicaid funding will ultimately result in shifting responsibility to the states and counties — leaving governors, state legislatures, and local governments facing tight budgets with no choice but to reduce health coverage, not to mention other important public health prevention measures.

Eliminating public health programs that are now funded by the ACA would seriously undermine the ability of cities and counties to protect and promote health. The loss of hundreds of millions of dollars would hamper efforts to respond to food borne illness outbreaks, prevent emerging infectious diseases like Ebola and Zika, and respond to natural disasters and other emergencies –to name just a few examples.

Our members urge you to sustain current investments in public health and prevention. Our nation needs a strong public health system with the capacity to promote health, prevent illness, and treat disease.

Sincerely,

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

Chrissie Juliano, MPP
Director, Big Cities Health Coalition