

# Urge Public Health and Prevention as Essential Elements of Health Reform

May 13, 2009

The Honorable Edward Kennedy  
Chairman  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions  
317 Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
511 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael Enzi  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions  
379A Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
135 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Kennedy & Baucus and Ranking Members Enzi & Grassley:

As your committees craft and consider a health reform package, the more than 225 undersigned organizations urge you to ensure that public health and prevention are essential elements of such legislation. We hope that health reform can serve as an opportunity to strengthen our public health infrastructure and reorient our health system towards prevention and preparedness. In particular, we request that your proposals accomplish the following goals:

Create a renewed focus on public health by establishing a **National Prevention Strategy** that sets specific goals and objectives for improving the nation's health through federally-supported prevention programs. The National Prevention Strategy would be consistent with the Healthy People 2020 goals and would identify priorities for expenditures. It could also help promote public health across all federal agencies and foster inter-agency and inter-departmental cooperation regarding health issues.

Establish a **Public Health and Wellness Trust Fund** which could be funded through a mandatory appropriation or set-aside of a portion of new revenues generated through the financing of health reform. Resources from the Trust Fund would be allocated to specific public health programs or activities as directed by the appropriations committees funding for Function 550 public health programs. The Trust Fund would support expansion of public health functions and services that surround, support, and strengthen the health care delivery system. It would finance:

- The core governmental public health functions of assessment, assurance, and policy development at the federal, state, and local levels.

- Population-level non-clinical prevention and wellness programs, which can be delivered through governmental agencies and non-governmental agencies, including those programs that integrate community-based population prevention with systems of medical care. Programs would be evidence-based community prevention programs that target priority health outcomes as identified in the National Prevention Strategy.
- Clinical preventive services (such as screenings and immunizations) delivered in community settings or by health departments that are not covered by third party payers.
- Workforce training and development, as well as public health research.

In addition, health reform legislation should:

- Strengthen scientific research and ensure the dissemination of best practices as the foundation of evidence-based public health;
- Ensure that federal prevention and public health policy addresses health inequities and disparities;
- Improve health surveillance to enable tracking of critical health indicators and monitoring and evaluation of disease trends; and
- Ensure that investments in Health IT take into account the needs of public health; and incorporating public health emergency response

As you know, the U.S. currently spends more than any other nation in the world on health care, but we lag behind on key health indicators, such as life expectancy. We need to make a serious course correction and reorient our health system towards prevention. As you develop and debate health reform proposals, we urge you to prioritize prevention and public health.

Sincerely,

100 Black Men of Charleston, Inc. (SC)  
 317 Coalition  
 Access Community Health Network  
 Access Institute  
 Advocates for EMS  
 AIDS Action Baltimore  
 AIDS Action Council  
 AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
 AIDS Project Los Angeles  
 ALERT Health  
 Alliance for Healthy Homes  
 All Saints Home Care and Referral Services  
 Alzheimer's Family Organization (Florida)  
 Alzheimer's Foundation of America  
 Alzheimer's Foundation of Staten Island, Inc. (NY)  
 Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area (Baton Rouge, LA)  
 American Academy of HIV Medicine  
 American Academy of Nursing

American Academy of Pediatrics  
 American Academy of Physician Assistants  
 American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance  
 American Association for Health Education  
 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
 American Association of Occupational Health Nurses  
 American Association on Health and Disability  
 American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
 American College of Clinical Pharmacy  
 American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine  
 American College of Preventive Medicine

American College of Sports Medicine	Center for Behavioral Research, School of Public Health, San Diego State University
American Heart Association	Center for Biosecurity, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
American Lung Association	Center for Cognitive Fitness & Innovative Therapies
American Nurses Association	Center for Communications, Health & the Environment
American Osteopathic Association	Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of MN
American Pediatric Society	Center for Science in the Public Interest
American Psychiatric Association	Chenango Health Network (NY)
American Public Health Association	Cherokee Nation
American School Health Association	Children's Dental Health Project
American Social Health Association	Children's Health Fund
American Society of Bariatric Physicians	CityMatCH
American Thoracic society	Cleveland Department of Public Health
amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research	Coastal Health District, Georgia
Arthritis Foundation	Commonweal (WA)
Assembly on School-Based Health Care	Community Health Councils
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research	Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Institute
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.	Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (NY and RI)
Association of Child and Maternal Health Programs	Continuum Senior Care Management, Inc.
Association of Immunization Managers	County Health Executives Association of California
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs	Defeat Diabetes Foundation
Association of Public Health Laboratories	Dementia Care Services, LLC (Texas)
Association of Schools of Public Health	Directors of Health Promotion and Education
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors	Emergency Nurses Association
Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing	Environmental Health Watch
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials	Epilepsy Foundation
Autism Society of America	Every Child By Two
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law	Fall Prevention Center of Excellence
Black Women's Health Imperative	FamilyCook Productions
Brain Injury Association of America	Family Voices
Breathe California	Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health - University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
Bridgeway Pointe Assisted Living in Cincinnati, Ohio	First Focus
California Center for Public Health Advocacy	Fitness Forward
California Conference of Local Health Officers	Flint Odyssey House, Inc Health Awareness Center (MI)
California Food Policy Advocates	
Campaign for Public Health	
CANN - Community Access National Network	
CardioVision 2020 (Minnesota)	
Caring Days Adult Day Care, A Program of Caring Congregations (Alabama)	

Georgetown County Diabetes CORE Group (SC)  
Georgia District 2 Public Health  
Georgia Public Health Association  
Golden Gate Designs  
Healthcare Consortium, Inc  
Health District 3-1 (Georgia)  
Health Education Network of Delaware  
Health Promotion Research Center, University of  
Washington  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Hepatitis Foundation International  
Hidalgo Medical Services (NM)  
HIV Medicine Association  
Home Safety Council  
Housing Works  
Howard University Center for Wellness and  
Weightloss Surgery  
Human Rights Campaign  
Immunization Action Coalition  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Institute for Health and Productivity Studies,  
Rollins School of Public Health, Emory  
University  
Institute of Public Health, Georgia State University  
InterAmerican Heart Foundation  
International Health, Racquet & Sports Club  
Association  
Khmer Health Advocates, Inc  
Lifelong AIDS Alliance (WA)  
Louisiana Public Health Institute  
Lutheran Family & Children's Services  
March of Dimes Foundation  
Massachusetts Public Health Association  
Mental Health America  
Michigan Department of Community Health,  
Healthy Homes University Program  
Nacogdoches Treatment Center – Alzheimer's Day  
Activity Program (Texas)  
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS  
Directors  
National Association for Public Health Statistics  
and Information Systems  
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors  
National Association of Community Health Centers  
National Association of Counties

National Association of County and City  
Health Officials  
National Association of Local Boards of  
Health  
National Association of People with AIDS  
National Association of RSVP Directors  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Association for Sport & Physical  
Education  
National Athletic Trainers' Association  
National Birth Defects Prevention  
Network  
National Coalition for Promoting Physical  
Activity  
National Coalition of STD Directors  
National Environmental Health  
Association  
National Forum for Heart Disease and  
Stroke Prevention  
National Health Council  
National Health Foundation  
National Health Science Honor Society  
(Eta Sigma Gamma)  
National Hispanic Health Foundation  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Initiative for Children's  
Healthcare Quality  
National League for Nursing  
National Medical Association  
National Network of Public Health  
Institutes  
National Nursing Centers Consortium  
National Nursing Network Organization  
National Parent Teacher Association  
National Recreation and Park Association  
National Research Center for Women &  
Families  
National Student Nurses' Association  
National TB Controllers Association  
National WIC Association  
Nemours  
Nevada Cancer Institute  
New York Academy of Medicine  
New York State Nutrition Council  
Novo Nordisk

Pacific Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities  
Partners for a Healthy Nevada  
Partnership for Prevention  
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Pop Warner Little Scholars  
Prevention Institute  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Project Lifesaver International (Virginia)  
Public Health Foundation  
Public Health Institute  
Public Health-Seattle & King County  
REACH US Lawndale Health Promotion Project,  
Chicago Dept. of Public Health  
Rebuilding Together  
Research!America  
Researchers against Inactivity-related Disorders  
RI Lead Techs, Inc.  
RWJF Center for Health Policy  
SAGE Eldercare (New Jersey)  
San Ysidro School District  
Save the Children  
Shaping America's Health  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society for Public Health Education  
South Beach AIDS Project, Inc.  
Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association  
State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association  
Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association  
TAKE CHARGE!!! Lifestyle Management, Inc.  
The Access Project  
The AIDS Institute  
The ARK, Adult Respite Kare and Alzheimer's Family Support Services

The Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago  
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
The National Coalition for LGBT Health  
The National Nursing Network Organization  
The New England Coalition for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention  
The Praxis Project  
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
Treatment Access Expansion Project  
Treatment Action Group (IL)  
Trust for America's Health  
United American Nurses, AFL-CIO  
United Fresh Produce Association  
United States Water Fitness Association  
United Way of America  
U.S. PIRG  
Visiting Nurse Associations of America  
Washington Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity  
Washington Health Foundation-Healthiest State in the Nation Campaign  
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease.  
Women's Sports Foundation  
YMCA of Greater Cleveland  
YMCA of the USA  
YOUR Center (MI)