



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,<sup>1</sup> and are the leading drivers of the nation's \$4.1 trillion in annual health care costs.<sup>2</sup> 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**

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup> 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](mailto:emily.holubowich@heart.org) or Erika Sward (American Lung Association) at [erika.sward@lung.org](mailto:erika.sward@lung.org).

Sincerely,

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

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

<sup>4</sup> 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