



April 18, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray  
 Chair  
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
 Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
 Committee on Appropriations  
 United States Senate  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
 Ranking Member  
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
 Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
 Committee on Appropriations  
 United States Senate  
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

As your Subcommittee moves forward with the FY 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge you to increase funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) by \$68.5 million, for a total of \$310 million. This increase would help OSH respond to high rates of e-cigarette use among youth and the devastating toll that tobacco<sup>1</sup> continues to take on our nation's health.

Tobacco use has long been the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. Tobacco is responsible for more than 480,000 deaths and approximately \$226 billion in health care costs in the United States each year. Nearly one in three heart disease deaths and cancer deaths and nearly eight in 10 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) deaths are caused by tobacco use. Tobacco use almost always begins during adolescence, and most adult smokers want to quit, but overcoming an addiction to nicotine is difficult and often requires multiple quit attempts.

Youth continue to use e-cigarettes at alarming levels. CDC and the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) most recent National Youth Tobacco Survey showed that more than 2 million middle and high school students reported using e-cigarettes in the first half of 2021, even when many schools were closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, 43.6 percent of all high school e-cigarette users used e-cigarettes on 20 or more days a month and 27.6 percent reported daily use, a sign that youth are addicted or at risk of addiction. Studies also show that young people who use e-cigarettes are more likely to become smokers. A more robust public health response is needed to prevent e-cigarettes from placing a new generation at risk for nicotine addiction and tobacco use.

Tobacco use is also a significant contributor to health disparities. While smoking rates overall have declined, smoking has become more concentrated among certain groups and in particular regions of the country. People with lower incomes and lower levels of education, Native Americans, people with behavioral health conditions, and LGBT Americans all have disproportionately higher rates of tobacco use, placing them at greater risk for tobacco-caused diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and respiratory disease. Black Americans die from smoking-caused diseases at far higher rates than other Americans despite starting to smoke at a later age, smoking fewer cigarettes per day, and being more likely to make a quit attempt.

OSH has a vital role to play in addressing tobacco use. OSH provides grants to states and territories to support tobacco prevention and cessation programs, runs a highly successful national media campaign called Tips from Former Smokers (Tips), conducts research on tobacco use, and develops best practices for reducing it. Additional resources will allow OSH to address the threat to public health posed by high rates of youth e-cigarette use while continuing to prevent and reduce other forms of tobacco use. With additional resources:

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<sup>1</sup> References to tobacco in this letter refer to commercial tobacco and not ceremonial tobacco which is used by some American Indian communities.

- CDC could better advance health equity by strengthening efforts to assist groups who are disproportionately harmed by tobacco products, including by designing and implementing prevention and cessation programs that are tailored to address their specific needs.
- CDC could enhance efforts to end youth and young adult tobacco use, including e-cigarette use, by providing more resources to state and local health departments; educating youth, parents, health professionals, communities, and others about tobacco products and the harms associated with their use; and identifying evidence-based strategies to protect youth and young adults from initiating tobacco use.
- CDC could expand a program that we know works to reduce tobacco use: the Tips media campaign. From 2012 through 2018, CDC estimates that more than 16.4 million people who smoke attempted to quit and approximately one million smokers have quit for good because of the Tips campaign. As a result, the Tips campaign has helped prevent an estimated 129,100 smoking-related deaths and saved an estimated \$7.3 billion in health care costs.

We appreciate that the FY 2022 Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill included a \$10 million increase for OSH. While the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-103) increased funding for OSH by \$4 million in FY 2022, additional investments in tobacco prevention and cessation will save lives, reduce tobacco-related health disparities, and reduce the cost of treating tobacco-caused disease. We urge you to increase funding for CDC's OSH from \$241.5 million to \$310 million, which will enable CDC to address the challenges posed by e-cigarettes, continue to make progress reducing the death and disease caused by other tobacco products, and strengthen efforts to assist groups disproportionately harmed by tobacco products.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry

Action Smoking and Health

African American Tobacco control Leadership Council

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Nursing

American Academy of Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association for Cancer Research

American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research

American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC)

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American College Health Association

American College of Cardiology

American College of Physicians

American Heart Association

American Kidney Fund

American Lung Association

American Medical Association

American Public Health Association

American Society of Addiction Medicine

American Thoracic Society

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights

Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)

Association for Clinical Oncology

Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)

Big Cities Health Coalition

Black Women's Health Imperative

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

CATCH Global Foundation

Catholic Health Association of the United States

Children's Health Fund

COPD Foundation

Emphysema Foundation of America

First Focus Campaign for Children

International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

March of Dimes

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)

National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN)

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of School Nurses

National Association of Social Workers

National Hispanic Council on Aging

National Hispanic Medical Association

National LGBT Cancer Network

National Network of Public Health Institutes

North American Quitline Consortium

Oncology Nursing Society

Parents Against Vaping e-cigarettes (PAVe)

Prevent Cancer Foundation

Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation/Tobacco 21

Public Health Solutions

Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions (SCAI)

Society for Public Health Education

Society For Research on Nicotine and Tobacco

Students Against Destructive Decisions

The Center for Black Equity

The Center for Black Health & Equity

The Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Trinity Health

Trust for America's Health