



October 4, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Pallone:

On behalf of the 4,000 members of the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), I am writing to voice our strong opposition to using any funding from the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Prevention Fund) to pay for the Community Health and Medical Professionals Improve our Nation Act of 2017 or for any purpose other than intended prevention activities. SOPHE urges members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee to work together to immediately extend funding for the critical safety net programs that expired on September 30, 2017 without cutting or diverting current and future funding allocations from the Prevention Fund.

SOPHE is a 501 (c)(3) professional organization founded in 1950 to provide global leadership to the profession of health education and health promotion. SOPHE contributes to the health of all people and the elimination of health disparities through advances in health education theory and research; excellence in professional preparation and practice; and advocacy for public policies conducive to health. Collectively, SOPHE's members are employed in universities, medical/health care settings, businesses, voluntary health agencies, international organizations, and all branches of federal/state/local government.

Working on the front lines to keep children as well as seniors healthy, SOPHE members have seen firsthand the critical role of the Prevention Fund, which is the single largest investment in our nation's health. High quality preventive care helps Americans stay healthy, avoid or delay onset of disease, lead productive working lives and reduces health care costs. Quality, affordable medical care and community prevention must work hand-in-hand. Prevention has a proven return on investment: Every \$1 spent on prevention saves \$5.60 in health spending; every \$1 spent on childhood vaccines saves \$16.50 in future health care costs. Some 75% of all US health care costs relate to preventable chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes, yet only 3 cents of every dollar is spent on prevention. **Prevention Fund activities have been overwhelmingly successful at addressing the costly problem of American's health illiteracy, preventing chronic conditions in elderly and vulnerable populations, and bending the cost curve in the American health care system.**

While SOPHE supports reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program and funding for community health centers, the National Health Service Corps, teaching health centers, family-to-family health information centers and the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program we remain opposed to any legislation that would jeopardize funding for critical public health programs including the Section 317 immunization program, the childhood lead prevention program, and the

Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant program in addition to providing 12% of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) budget. The CHAMPION Act's proposed cut to the Prevention Fund of \$6.35 billion, 57% of the Prevention Fund, would be devastating to the nation's progress in bending the health care cost curve by preventing the costliest chronic conditions in both children and adults.

We urge you to oppose the CHAMPION Act in its current form and any legislation that would rescind funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Please contact Dr. Cicily Hampton at (champton@sophe.org) or 202-408-9804 with any additional questions.

Sincerely,

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

Elaine Auld, MPH, MCHES
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce