



April 8, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
 Chair  
 House Appropriations Subcommittee  
 on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
 Education, and Related Agencies  
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
 Ranking Member  
 House Appropriations Subcommittee  
 on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
 Education, and Related Agencies  
 Washington, DC 20515

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

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

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Chairwoman Murray and Ranking Members Granger and Blunt:

The undersigned public health organizations urge you to increase funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Climate and Health Program to \$110 million in the FY 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. This funding is necessary to help state and local health departments prepare and protect their communities from the health threats posed by climate change that they are already experiencing.

Climate change is a health emergency. Urgent action to reduce greenhouse gases is needed to prevent the impacts from reaching catastrophic levels, but we must recognize that health is being

impacted now. The public health workforce needs adequate resources to identify risks and develop and implement climate adaptation action plans to protect communities across the country. CDC's Climate and Health Program is the only federal program that helps states, cities, territories and Tribes prepare for and respond to the specific local health impacts of climate change.

These health impacts threaten the patients and communities that our organizations serve. Broadly speaking, these impacts include increased spread of vector-borne diseases like Lyme Disease, increased risk of chronic disease morbidity and mortality due to degraded air quality from ozone pollution and wildfire smoke, hotter temperatures, extreme weather events and longer allergy seasons. Communities must have the resources necessary to understand their specific current and anticipated health impacts of climate change and take steps to protect the public's health.

The Climate and Health Program currently funds nine states, two cities and three Tribes. More states and cities used to receive funding, but after years of no increases in funding, the decision was made to fund fewer states at a more sufficient level. More adequate funding could restore former programs and create new ones. Examples of the projects supported by this program include: the development of an environmental equity tool in Wisconsin to better pinpoint the most impacted communities from pollution, climate change and socioeconomic factors; a resilience planning toolkit in Oregon that uses lessons learned from local partners to guide local health departments in their response; the identification of specific communities at greatest risk due to sea level rise in North Carolina; and a weatherization health technical report in Vermont that shows how weatherization such as insulation and ventilation can better protect health and lower energy costs.

The Climate and Health Program has been hindered in its ability to rise to its full – and necessary – potential due to insufficient funds. Increasing funding for this program to \$110 million would serve three critical purposes. First, it would allow CDC to fund all states and territories, becoming a national resource and financial support system for states as they prepare for and respond to the health impacts of climate change. Second, it would improve the program's ability to fill gaps in climate surveillance by better integrating weather and ecological system data with health outcomes. Third, it would allow CDC to offer more scientific and epidemiological studies and resources on climate change and the health outcomes stemming from it. Additionally, CDC would be better equipped to evaluate the grantees' work to identify and be able to share best practices with communities nationwide.

Americans today experience negative health impacts due to climate change. Further investment in the Climate and Health Program will help communities across the country better prepare and protect their residents. Thank you for considering our recommendation and we look forward to working with you throughout the appropriations process.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
Allergy & Asthma Network  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Physicians  
American Heart Association

American Lung Association  
American Thoracic Society  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Big Cities Health Coalition  
Children's Environmental Health Network  
Climate for Health  
Climate Psychiatry Alliance  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
Health Care Without Harm  
March of Dimes  
Medical Students for a Sustainable Future  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Environmental Health Association  
Prevention Institute  
Public Health Institute  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
Trust for America's Health  
Research!America