

November 12, 2010

U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, MD
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Surgeon General
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Benjamin:

The 80 undersigned organizations applaud you and your colleagues for beginning a national dialogue on the National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy (NPS). We believe the framework released on October 1st provides a valuable starting point for discussion by focusing on specific health improvement opportunities.

As organizations that advocated for the NPS to be included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), we see the NPS as an extraordinary opportunity to commit the federal government to assuring that today's generation of children have longer, healthier lives than their parents. OECD data ranks the U.S. last among comparable developed countries for life expectancy at birth and second to last for life expectancy at age 65. **The National Prevention Strategy should set as a national goal that the U.S. ranks first in the world for life expectancy at birth and at age 65.** This is an aspirational vision that all Americans can embrace; the strategy then becomes a vehicle for demonstrating how all federal agencies – as they carry out their core missions – can contribute to this universal goal.

We hope the NPS will frame for federal agencies, policymakers, and the American people the evidence-based argument that multiple factors contribute to long, healthy lives. Many things the federal government does – from education to violence prevention to community development -- contribute to longevity, along with quality health care and public health initiatives.

As you finalize the NPS, we urge that you set a limited number of broad, universally embraced health goals for the nation, committing all federal agencies to assess their core mission through a lens that assures they are working toward these goals, and moving the federal government to an integrative approach to reaching these national goals.

Again, we thank you for opening a national dialogue on the National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy, and we look forward to working with you in the months ahead as you finalize the document, and to subsequently work together to achieve progress toward the goals.

Cc: Members of the National Prevention, Health Promotion and Public Health Council

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association on Health and Disability
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Beach Cities Health District (CA)
Black Women's Health Imperative
Boston Public Health Commission
Buncombe County Department of Health (NC)
California Center for Public Health Advocacy
California Center for Youth Development and Health Promotion
California Friday Night Live Partnership
California Newsreel
California Public Health Association – North
California WALKS
California WIC Association
Center for Community Health & Health Equity, Belmont University (TN)
Center for Health Improvement
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
CommonHealth ACTION
Community Action Partnership
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Defeat Diabetes Foundation
Detroit Center for Community-driven Policymaking
e:merge (CA)
Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education
Health Resources in Action
Hepatitis Foundation International
Healthy Building Network
Ho-Chunk Nation
Home Safety Council
Institute for Health and Productivity Studies,
 Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University
International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association
Jefferson County Department of Health
Leap for Joy: Fitness for Health
Legacy
LifeLong Medical Care
Louisiana Public Health Institute
Maya Dunne and Associates
MEND Foundation
Mental Health America
Missouri Association of Local Public Health Agencies

National Association for Sport and Physical Education
National Business Coalition on Health
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
National Environmental Health Association
National Network of Public Health Institutes
National Violence Prevention Network
NCB Capital Impact
Nemours
New Hampshire Public Health Improvement Services Council.
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
New York State Association of County Health Officials
Northwest Health Foundation
Oregon Public Health Institute
Prevention Institute
Prevention Research Center at South Oaks Hospital (NY)
Public Health Foundation
Public Health Institute
Public Health Law and Policy
Public Health – Seattle and King County
Public Health Solutions
Run Drugs Out of Town, Inc.
Safe States Alliance
Salud Para La Gente
San Diego Black Health Associates, Inc.
Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The Prostate Cancer Awareness Project
The Youth Becoming Healthy Project, Inc.
Trust for America's Health
W.K. Kellogg Foundation