October 31, 2025

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

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Capito, Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Baldwin, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you develop a final Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we urge you to adequately fund the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and provide the Senate-approved funding level of $246.5 million for its Office on Smoking and Health (OSH). We further urge you to ensure that specific funding levels for OSH and CDC's other chronic disease prevention and health promotion programs are incorporated into the bill text to ensure that the Administration spends those funds as Congress intends.

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, responsible for nearly 500,000 deaths and costing the nation more than $600 billion each year, including $241 billion in health care costs. More than 60 percent of these health care costs are paid for by government programs like Medicare and Medicaid. Preventing youth from starting to use tobacco products and helping adults who use tobacco to quit improves health, saves lives, and reduces the financial burden that tobacco use imposes on families, employers, and governments.

At a time when there is renewed focus on preventing chronic disease and protecting children's health, it is essential that Congress provide CDC with resources to reduce the death and disease caused by tobacco use. Cigarette smoking is a major contributor to chronic disease, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, COPD, and diabetes. Any comprehensive effort to prevent chronic disease must address the use of tobacco products.

Youth use of tobacco products remains a serious public health concern. CDC and the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) most recent National Youth Tobacco Survey showed that more than 2.25 million youth, including 10.1 percent of high schoolers, reported using a tobacco product last year. E-cigarettes have been the most popular tobacco product among youth since 2014. Alarmingly, nearly 2 in 5 youth e-cigarette users reported use on 20 days or more a month, including 1 in 4 who reported daily use, a sign that youth are becoming addicted. According to the CDC, e-cigarettes can expose users to nicotine and other potentially harmful substances like nickel, lead and formaldehyde, and are not safe. A more robust public health response is needed to prevent tobacco products from placing a new generation at risk for nicotine addiction and the serious and costly chronic diseases caused by tobacco use.

We strongly support the Senate's bill, which maintains current funding for CDC's OSH and includes guardrails to help ensure that the Administration would spend the funds as Congress intended, such as by specifying that funds "shall be for the purposes and in the amounts specified as appropriations in table under this heading in the report accompanying this Act." This is in contrast to the House's bill that would significantly cut funding for CDC and would fail to restore the critical function of OSH. If these funds were eliminated, as proposed by the House:

- CDC would no longer be able to provide funding and technical assistance to states to implement evidence-based programs to prevent youth use of e-cigarettes and other tobacco products. Most state tobacco control programs are significantly underfunded compared to recommended funding levels. If OSH funding and technical assistance are eliminated, states will lose approximately $70 million in tobacco control program funding, and 13 states would lose 30 percent or more of their total tobacco control program budget.

- States would no longer receive federal support for state quitlines, which help people who use tobacco to quit. Five states and territories rely on CDC funding for at least 75 percent of their quitline budget and likely would be unable to continue operations if OSH funding

is eliminated. Many other quitlines likely would need to reduce the level and type of services they can provide, including the availability of free nicotine replacement therapy.

- CDC would not have the resources to continue its highly effective national public awareness campaign, *Tips from Former Smokers*, which helped approximately one million people who smoke to quit, prevented 129,100 smoking-related deaths, and saved an estimated $7.3 billion in health care costs from 2012 through 2018.

As you work to finalize the FY 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we urge you to ensure that CDC's OSH is funded at the Senate's $246.5 million funding level and that the Administration spends the full amount for this purpose. Adequately funding OSH is necessary, not only to sustain state programs, the Tips campaign and the quitlines, but also to rebuild the staff capacity that has been diminished and is essential to carrying out these responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry

Action on Smoking & Health

African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council

AME Church Social Action Commission

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

American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American College Health Association

American College of Cardiology

American College of Chest Physicians

American College of Physicians

American Dental Association

American Heart Association

American Indian Cancer Foundation

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 (ASCO)

Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use & Dependence

Association of Black Women Physicians

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Big Cities Health Coalition

Black Women's Health Imperative

Breathe Southern California

CADCA

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

CATCH Global Foundation

Catholic Health Association of the United States

COPD Foundation

Counter Tools

Families USA

First Focus Campaign for Children

IntelliQuit

LUNGevity Foundation

MomsRising

NAACP

National Association of Black Oncologists

National Association of County and City Health Officials

National Association of Hispanic Nurses

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of School Nurses

National Association of Social Workers

National Center for Health Research

National Coalition for LGBTQ Health

National Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Black Women's Roundtable

National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN)

National Council for Mental Wellbeing

National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians

National Forum for Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention

National Hispanic Health Foundation

National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)

National League for Nursing

National Medical Association

National Network of Public Health Institutes

National PTA

National Tongan American Society

NCNW

North American Quitline Consortium

Oncology Nursing Society

Parents Against Vaping

Prevent Cancer Foundation

Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation/Tobacco 21

Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

Respiratory Health Association

Save A Girl, Save A World

Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

Society for Public Health Education

Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco

The Cancer Network

The Center for Black Health & Equity

The Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education

The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Tobacco Free Portfolios

Trust for America's Health

WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease