

October 26, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As leaders of national organizations committed to the public's health, we urge you to reject any effort to cap or repeal the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Prevention Fund) as you work with Congress to discuss solutions to deficit reduction and sequestration relief. With news reports stating Congress and the White House may be on the cusp of a deal, we hope you will work with lawmakers to enact a balanced approach to sequestration relief and ensure the maintenance of the Prevention Fund as an essential component to reigning in health care costs associated with chronic and infectious diseases. We thank you for your past support of the Prevention Fund, which was most recently acknowledged in the Statement of Administration Policy for H.R. 3762, the House-passed budget reconciliation package. Finally, we also ask that you reject any extension of sequestration on mandatory funding.

The Prevention Fund has been a critical component of the Affordable Care Act that is focusing on creating healthier communities and reducing health care costs over the long term. Budget caps required by the Budget Control Act have resulted in grossly inadequate funding for critical public health programs. Yet our nation faces growing public health challenges that require sustained, stable investment, which the Prevention Fund has helped to provide.

In the first six years since its inception, the Prevention Fund has invested nearly \$5.25 billion in resources to states, communities, tribal and community organizations in support of community-based prevention, including tobacco use prevention, healthy eating and active living, as well as increasing access to immunizations and other clinical preventive services. Cutting the Prevention Fund would dramatically impede efforts underway to improve health, including:

- **The Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant**, which was doubled under the Prevention Fund and provides all 50 states, the District of Columbia, two American Indian tribes, and eight U.S. territories with flexible funding to address their unique public health issues at the state and community level.
- **Expanding Access to Cancer Screenings:** In FY 2015, the Fund provided \$104 million for the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, which is helping

states across the country provide cancer screenings to high risk women who are uninsured or underinsured.

- **The successful *Tips from Former Smokers*** campaign, which in just its first three months inspired more than 1.6 million people to try to quit smoking, and more than 100,000 smokers have quit for good. *The Lancet* estimates the growth in smokers who quit and became sustained quitters because of the Tips campaign may have added from a third to almost half a million quality-adjusted life-years to the U.S. population.

Funding for the Section 317 Immunization Program, which has been vital to preventing and responding to recent measles outbreaks, and epidemiology and laboratory capacity grants in all states, which are key to detecting and containing infectious disease outbreaks.

More than [900 state and national organizations](#) have pledged their support for the Prevention Fund, including the [American Medical Association](#) (AMA), which has spoken out multiple times in opposition to using the Fund for purposes other than preventing disease and promoting health. In November 2012, the AMA House of Delegates adopted a [resolution](#) to “actively oppose policies that aim to cut, divert, or use as an offset, dollars from the Prevention and Public Health Fund for purposes other than those stipulated in the Affordable Care Act.”

The Prevention Fund has already been slashed by \$6.25 billion as an offset for a temporary Medicare physician payment fix within the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-96). Sequestration on mandatory funding has caused additional reductions in the Prevention Fund, together resulting in a lost opportunity to invest in proven, evidence-based interventions that can reduce healthcare costs and save lives.

We commend you for your commitment to prevention and making the Affordable Care Act a success. As you work to find long-term, balanced solutions to sequestration and budget caps, we respectfully urge you to protect the Prevention Fund from any further reductions. An approach to deficit reduction that cuts investments designed to prevent disease and illness may actually lead to increased future health care spending and even larger federal deficits.

If you have any questions, please contact Becky Salay, Director of Government Relations at Trust for America’s Health, at bsalay@tfah.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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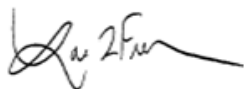
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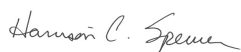
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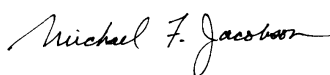
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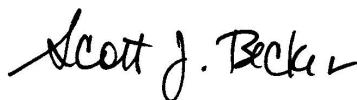
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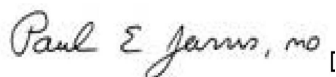
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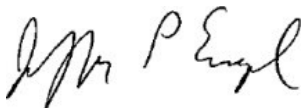
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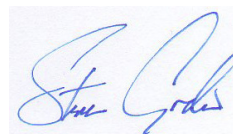
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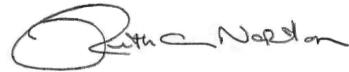
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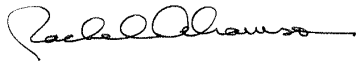
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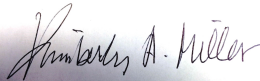
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cc: HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell, OMB Director Shaun Donovan