

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) COALITION

c/o American Public Health Association 800 I Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001 (202) 777-2514

December, 2008

The Honorable Barack Obama
President-elect
Washington, DC

Dear President-elect Obama:

The undersigned members of the CDC Coalition thank you for your past support for CDC and its “core programs” and urge you to make funding for the nation’s public health agency a priority in 2009. Unfortunately, in recent years, funding for many of the programs within CDC has been cut or level funded. In fact, with inflation, CDC’s budget for “core programs” has lost between \$500 and \$800 million in spending power since 2005. We strongly believe that the activities and programs supported by CDC are essential to protect and improve the health of the American people and we urge you to make strengthening CDC’s budget a priority in the coming year.

The CDC Coalition is a nonpartisan coalition of more than 100 groups committed to strengthening our nation’s prevention programs. Our mission is to ensure that health promotion and disease prevention are given top priority in federal funding, to support a funding level for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that enables it to carry out its prevention mission, and to assure an adequate translation of new research into effective state and local programs. Coalition member groups represent millions of public health workers, researchers, educators, and citizens served by CDC programs.

CDC is faced with unprecedented challenges and responsibilities, ranging from bioterrorism preparedness, chronic disease prevention, eliminating health disparities to combating tobacco and the obesity epidemics. In addition, CDC funds state and community programs in injury control; health promotion efforts in schools and workplaces; initiatives to prevent heart disease, cancer, stroke, and other chronic diseases; improvements in nutrition and immunization; programs to monitor and combat environmental effects on health; interventions to improve oral health; prevention of birth defects; public health research; strategies to prevent antimicrobial resistance and infectious diseases; and data collection and analysis on a host of vital statistics and other health indicators. It is notable that more than 70 percent of CDC’s budget supports state and local health organizations and academic institutions.

CDC serves as the command center for our nation’s public health defense system against emerging and reemerging infectious diseases. From pandemic flu preparedness and prevention activities to West Nile to smallpox to SARS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is the nation’s -- and the world’s -- expert resource and response center, coordinating communications and action and serving as the laboratory reference center. States and communities rely on CDC for accurate information and direction in a crisis or outbreak.

The CDC Coalition believes that CDC programs are crucial to the health of millions of Americans, key to maintaining a strong public health infrastructure, and essential in protecting us from threats to our health. We are grateful for your support in the past and urge your continued support for this critical public health agency.

Sincerely,

AIDS Institute
American Association for Health Education
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Lung Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Red Cross
American School Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Association of Schools of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Brain Injury Association of America
Campaign for Public Health
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
National Association of County and City Health Officials
Trust for America's Health

Cc: The Honorable Tom Daschle
Jeanne Lambrew, PhD