

COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

Emily J. Holubowich, MPP, Executive Director

June 24, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Mikulski,

The Coalition for Health Funding is pleased with the Senate Appropriations Committee's 302(b) allocations for discretionary spending in FY2014, especially for the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

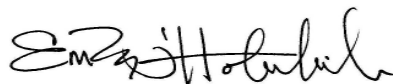
We appreciate the efforts of the Senate to increase funding for public health programs, including medical and scientific research, public health surveillance, disease prevention, and mental health, among others. The federal health agencies comprising the public health continuum— Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resources and Services Administration, National Institutes of Health and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration among others—have benefited from longstanding, bipartisan support of Congress and administrations, and Americans' lives are better because of it.

Federal agencies and the programs they support have a unique role in enhancing Americans' health and well-being. Evidence abounds—from the Department of Defense to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—that healthy Americans are stronger on the battlefield, have higher academic achievement, and are more productive in school and on the job. Healthy Americans drive our economic engine, and ultimately cost our nation less in health care spending. Investment in these areas has and will continue to show returns on taxpayer dollars. **The Senate's allocations reflect investments in these vital programs that are necessary to protect and improve our nation's health.**

However, we remain gravely concerned about the impact of public health cuts to date, including sequestration. Congress must replace sequestration with a balanced approach to deficit reduction that does not include further cuts to these important programs. Otherwise, the efforts made to protect these programs from further erosion in FY 2014 will be for naught. Unfortunately, it seems there is a fundamental lack of *understanding* about discretionary programs as a whole and the value they provide in helping Americans lead healthy, safe, and productive lives. There needs to be a bipartisan effort to address our fiscal challenges in a meaningful way—by replacing sequestration and addressing the true drivers of the debt.

We implore you to put partisan politics aside and fix sequestration, once and for all.

Sincerely,



Emily Holubowich
Executive Director

<http://www.publichealthfunding.org>