



March 19, 2019

Senator Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

As members of the Adult Vaccine Access Coalition (AVAC), we write to ask for full funding of immunization-related activities at the Department of Health and Human Services as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS), and Education Appropriations bill.

Immunizations are a sound investment because they are a highly cost-effective form of preventive medicine that help save lives by protecting the health and wellbeing of individuals and families in communities nationwide. Vaccines not only help protect the immunized person but they can also help protect those around them who may not be able to be immunized because they are too young to be vaccinated themselves or suffer from a health condition that prevents them from being immunized. We ask the Committee to strongly support the following programs in the FY20 LHHS bill:

\$710 million for the National Immunization Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) and a 22% increase for the agency by 2022. The immunization program at CDC provides funding to state and local health departments to carry out a variety of activities vital to the prevention, detection, and mitigation of vaccine-preventable conditions. These essential grants are utilized not only for the purchase of vaccines for children, adolescents and adults, but also to support a number of other important activities, including: surveillance, safety and effectiveness studies, education and outreach, implementation of evidence-based community interventions to increase immunization coverage among

underserved and high-risk populations, and vaccine-preventable disease outbreak response. Over the past several years, immunization infrastructure financing has grown more complex, with around 50 percent of immunization funding coming from the Prevention and Public Health Fund. At a time when disease outbreaks – including measles, Hepatitis A, and Hepatitis B—are on the rise, these resources are vital to communities across the country, many of whom rely solely on these funds to support their immunization activities.

We support sustained, predictable, and increased funding for the CDC with an overall 22 percent increase in funding for the agency by 2022. Immunizations are at the center of CDC's work and should be a priority of our federal public health strategy. A \$1.5 billion total funding increase over three years will allow CDC to better implement effective programs to address federal, state, and local public health priorities such as saving lives through drug overdose/opioid abuse; chronic disease prevention; disaster preparedness and response; and combatting infectious diseases.

\$197.5 million for Influenza Planning and Response at CDC's NCIRD. CDC's Influenza Planning and Response programs help to protect the United States from seasonal influenza and pandemic influenza. Each winter, influenza causes millions of illnesses and hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations. The 2017-2018 season was especially dangerous with an estimated 80,000 Americans having died from influenza and its complications. Providing \$187.5 million for the program will ensure CDC has the resources necessary to address the continual threats posed by seasonal and pandemic influenza.

\$6.4 million for the National Vaccine Program Office (NVPO). NVPO plays an essential role in coordinating immunization activities among the various federal agencies. These dollars will also help ensure robust implementation of the National Adult Immunization Plan (NAIP). This comprehensive plan lays out overarching goals along with a series of tangible objectives aimed at raising adult immunization rates in line with federal targets. The NAIP also contains specific milestones intended to monitor progress on improving adult immunization.

Now more than ever, we must fully fund immunization programs to prevent and mitigate disease outbreaks. We look forward to working with your office as the FY20 appropriations process gets underway. For further information, please contact the AVAC managers at 202-540-1070 or info@adultvaccinesnow.org.

Sincerely,
Alliance for Aging Research
American Academy of Family Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine

American Immunization Registry Association
American Public Health Association
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association of Immunization Managers
Association of Occupational Health Nurses
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Dynavax
Familles Fighting Flu
GSK
Hep B United
Hepatitis B Foundation
Hepatitis Education Project
Immunization Action Coalition
Immunization Coalition of Washington, DC
Infectious Diseases Society of America
March of Dimes
Medicago
National Association of City and County Health Officials
National Consumers League
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable
Novavax
Pfizer
Sanofi
Scientific Technologies Corporation
Seqirus
Takeda Vaccines
The Gerontological Society of America
Trust for America's Health
Vaccinate Your Family

Cc: members of the United States Senate