



For Immediate Release
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BLUMENTHAL & MATSUI LEAD INTRODUCTION OF BICAMERAL LEGISLATION TO RESTORE \$2 BILLION IN ANNUAL PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING

Supported by more than 180 public health groups, the Public Health Funding Restoration Act would fund the development & expansion of vital public health programs.

[WASHINGTON, DC] – Today, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and U.S. Representative Doris Matsui (D-CA) announced introduction of bicameral legislation to authorize and appropriate \$2 billion in Fiscal Year 2020 and each subsequent fiscal year to fully restore the Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF). Established as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the PPHF supports vaccination programs, chronic disease prevention programs, and health education programs. Under the ACA, funding for the PPHF was supposed to increase over time and reach \$2 billion in Fiscal Year 2015. However, the PPHF has been repeatedly cut in lieu of other legislative priorities, and has never reached the \$2 billion funding level. The lack of appropriated funds has prevented core public health programs from expanding, and prevented the development of new, innovative programs to respond to unique public health threats that continue to arise.

“This bill marks a historic investment in lifesaving public health programs, which have been neglected for far too long. A robust Public Health and Prevention Fund will support vital federal and local efforts to combat existing public health crises, like the measles outbreak, teen e-cigarette epidemic, and high rates of chronic illness. Restoring this fund will also ensure our nation is ready for any public health threats that may emerge in the future,” said Blumenthal.

“When we passed the Affordable Care Act, we made a strong commitment to public health programs by creating the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Unfortunately, this program has been regularly underfunded or raided to pay for other priorities – to the detriment of communities across the country. With increasing rates of suicide, substance use disorder,

and contraction of preventable diseases like measles, we need robust public health funding now more than ever,” said Matsui, a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. “By fully funding the Prevention and Public Health Fund at the originally intended \$2 billion funding level, we can better support public health departments in their efforts to improve patient outcomes and create communities where everyone has the opportunity to live healthy and fulfilling lives.”

On June 18, more than 180 public health organizations sent a [letter](#) to Blumenthal and Matsui to express their concerns about the state of public health funding in the United States.

“Public health is chronically underfunded. As public health faces 21st century threats – such as the substance misuse and suicide epidemics, infectious disease outbreaks, and increases in chronic disease rates – resources have not kept pace,” wrote the organizations.

In the letter, the public health organizations also highlighted the cost-effectiveness of public health programs.

“A 2017 systematic review of the return on investment of public health interventions in high-income countries found a median return of 14 to 1. Tips from Former Smokers has led to over 500,000 Americans quitting smoking for good. And CDC estimates that every dollar spent on childhood immunization saves society more than \$10, and childhood immunizations prevented 855,000 early deaths over 23 years,” wrote the organizations. “Despite the growing burden of largely preventable diseases and strong evidence supporting investments in prevention, federal disease prevention and public health programs remain critically underfunded.”

In the United States Senate, the legislation is co-sponsored by U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Patty Murray (D-WA), Edward Markey (D-MA), Robert P. Casey Jr. (D-PA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Tina Smith (D-MN), and Cory Booker (D-NJ).

In the U.S. House of Representatives, the legislation is co-sponsored by U.S. Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY), Yvette Clarke (D-NY), Peter Welch (D-VT), Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), Tony Cardenas (D-CA), Annie Kuster (D-NH), Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE), Robin Kelly (D-IL), John Sarbanes (D-MD), Jerry McNerney (D-CA), Joe Kennedy III (D-MA), Nanette Barragan (D-CA), Barbara Lee (D-CA), and Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM).

The bill is also endorsed by more than 180 public health groups, including Trust for America’s Health, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Public Health Association, Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs, Association of Public Health Laboratories, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, March of Dimes, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Council on Aging, Nemours Children’s Health System, and Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

“We are grateful for Senator Blumenthal and Congresswoman Matsui’s leadership on this bill,” said Trust For America’s Health President and CEO John Auerbach. “They have

been longstanding champions for the Prevention Fund, and we worked with the Congresswoman on the original legislation that led to creation of the Fund. The Prevention Fund invests in proven, effective programs in every state. It supports state and local programs that are reducing tobacco use, increasing immunizations and preventing chronic disease. We have already seen half a million people quit smoking for good thanks to the Fund. The days of cutting the Fund or using it as an offset should be behind us. Restoring the Fund to its originally intended levels would allow innovative, transformative investments in public health and prevention.”

“The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) is pleased to endorse the Public Health Funding Restoration Act. Restoring funding to the Prevention and Public Health Fund will allow state and territorial health departments to realize the fund’s full potential in supporting prevention and public health programs. This resource is critical because it is core to the work of governmental public health in detecting and responding to outbreaks, preventing tobacco use, and immunizing our children. We look forward to working with Congress and the Administration to get this bill signed into law,” said ASHTO CEO Michael Fraser.

“As a leading voice for public health in the U.S., we thank Senator Blumenthal and Representative Matsui for introducing this important legislation to invest in public health. The Public Health Funding Restoration Act will boost and restore funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund to its intended level to strengthen the public health system, prioritize prevention and support our communities in addressing their most pressing health challenges,” said American Public Health Association Executive Director Dr. Georges Benjamin.

“Heart disease is the leading cause of death and stroke is the No. 5 cause of death in this country, making investments in the prevention of disease critical for promoting public health and reining in health care costs. AHA is a strong supporter of the Prevention and Public Health Fund and proudly supports the Public Health Funding Restoration Act. Restoring robust funding for important public health initiatives like the Million Hearts Program, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, and the CDC Office on Smoking & Health are essential to preventing and treating cardiovascular disease. If passed, this bill would help ensure adequate public investments in these and many more public health programs that have suffered cuts over the last few years. Providing full funding for the Prevention Fund will improve our nation’s health and help reduce health care costs. We are grateful to Senator Blumenthal, Representative Matsui and their colleagues for their leadership on this important issue,” said American Heart Association Executive Vice President of Advocacy Mark Schoeberl.

Between Fiscal Year 2010 and Fiscal Year 2018, Connecticut received \$55,215,566 in funding from the PPHF. California received \$397,955,022. More state figures can be found [here](#).