

April 2, 2021

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Pingree, Chairman Merkley and Ranking Members Joyce and Murkowski:

The undersigned public health and environmental health organizations urge you to provide \$93 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry in the FY 2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We thank you for the \$1.3 million increase for ATSDR in FY 2021 and we are also grateful for the \$12.5 million in emergency supplemental appropriations provided to ATSDR for COVID-19 preparedness and response activities including for mapping of disease outbreak hotspots and providing guidance on safe disinfectant practices and healthy home environments.

ATSDR establishes and maintains effective relationships with people in communities that are impacted by environmental hazards throughout the nation. ATSDR assists impacted communities by investigating and addressing their environmental hazards. ATSDR's environmental health expertise, regional locations and ability to respond 24/7 enables the agency to respond to and address environmental health threats from chemical spills and other emergencies at a moment's notice. In FY 2019, ATSDR responded to more than 700 community, state, and federal requests, addressing the potential health risk of over 2 million people around the country. The agency also educated over 31,600 health professionals on ways to diagnose and treat conditions related to hazardous exposures. ATSDR is conducting groundbreaking work to address emerging contaminants, such as the first ever nation-wide exposure assessments at sites with high levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance in drinking water. With the objective to determine serum PFAS concentrations in the community and understand how they compare to the general population, the EAs have included 2,345 participants, assessed over 1,398 households and reached over 150,000 people through social media.

As a result of the increased funding received in FY 2020, ATSDR increased the number of states funded through the ATSDR Partnership to Promote Local Efforts to Reduce Environmental Exposure (APPLETREE) cooperative agreement to 28. Sixteen recipient states received an additional \$1.4 million in COVID-19 supplemental funding through APPLETREE to provide guidance and community engagement on safe practices for disinfection for home, school and early learning education centers. ATSDR also supports ten Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units that advise parents and pediatric health providers on protecting and caring for

children potentially exposed to harmful chemicals. In addition to the thousands of trainings conducted, PEHSUs have provided over 1,000 consultations benefitting nearly 2,500 health professionals, parents and community members. ATSDR's PEHSUs and other partners engaged early in the COVID-19 response to deliver timely education and disseminate guidance on safely disinfecting the home during the pandemic and other guidance on chemicals of public health concern.

To address data needs for the COVID-19 response, ATSDR's Geospatial Research, Analysis, and Services Program developed a COVID Data Tracker Dashboard using technology and data from multiple organizations to increase the understanding of the novel coronavirus, target behaviors and populations that have increased risk, explore the impact and recovery of the existing healthcare system and to provide timely information to the public. In one week of the response, the dashboard received nearly 8 million views, and the CDT has recorded an estimated 110 million views overall since it was launched in April 2020. Additionally, ATSDR's Social Vulnerability Index has been used to create a Pandemic Vulnerability Index to map populations that are more vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19.

We urge you to support \$93 million for ATSDR in the FY 2022 which would allow the agency to continue the progress made with the increased funding Congress provided in FY 2020 and FY 2021 and would also significantly enhance the agency's ability to respond to community requests for assistance, fund and support state and local health departments and protect the nation's health.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Public Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Children's Environmental Health Network
Climate for Health, ecoAmerica
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
International Society for Environmental Epidemiology -- North American Chapter
Medical Students for a Sustainable Future
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials

National Center for Healthy Housing
National Environmental Health Association
National League for Nursing
National Network of Public Health Institutes
Society for Public Health Education
Trust for America's Health