

May 14, 2024

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairwoman Baldwin, and Ranking Member Capito:

The 38 undersigned organizations and communities working to promote the health of all individuals **urge you to provide at least \$102.5 million in the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program.** Specifically, we request **\$75.5 million for CDC's core REACH** grant program and **\$27 million for its affiliated program Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC)** to address the disproportionate impact of chronic disease on racial and ethnic populations in urban, rural, and tribal areas.

For 25 years, the REACH program has explicitly focused on reducing disparities in the rates of chronic diseases for specific racial and ethnic groups in communities. REACH grantees plan and carry out locally driven, culturally appropriate programs to address the root causes of chronic disease and reduce health disparities among people who are African American or Black, Hispanic or Latino, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native.

REACH has been a model CDC program using community-level strategies that are evidence-based or evidence informed to eliminate and reduce racial and ethnic health disparities in chronic disease and related risk factors (i.e., tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity). Key REACH outcomes during the previous REACH grant period include (October 2018 to September 2023):

- 1,058,458 people impacted by healthy nutrition standards implemented in community settings;
- 2,311,228 people served by new or enhanced places providing access to healthier foods;
- 8,612,187 people reached through activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations;
- 1,278,601 people benefited from new or improved breastfeeding support programs;
- 41,502 patients linked to community-based services by their health care providers;

- 1,021,884 employees work in settings with new or strengthened smoke-free and tobacco-free policies.

American Indian and Alaskan Native (AI/AN) populations bear a disproportionate burden of the leading causes of death and disability compared to other racial and ethnic groups. Since FY 2017, Congress has therefore set aside a portion of REACH funding to support the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) non-add line. This funding line supports tribal cooperative agreements that improve health outcomes for AI/AN communities, through the Healthy Tribes program, which includes GHWIC, Tribal Practices for Wellness in Indian Country, and the Tribal Epidemiology Centers Public Health Infrastructure. These funds support the Tribal Epidemiology Centers Public Health Infrastructure as the main source of funding for TECs. The programs provide Tribal leaders with resources, technical assistance, and evidence-based policies that each grantee can then create unique chronic disease prevention programs that center tribal history, traditions, and beliefs.

We thank the L-HHS Subcommittee for the \$44.95 million provided for the core REACH program and \$24 million for GHWIC. While we are grateful for the support, it still falls short of being able to fund a program in all 50 states and U.S. territories. While there are 574 federally recognized tribes, the Healthy Tribes program can only fund 35 tribes directly and supports other tribes through funding 12 tribal organizations, 17 Urban Indian Organizations, and 12 Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs).

We are urging Congress to provide at least \$102.5 million for the REACH program in the FY 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. This includes \$75.5 million for the core REACH program and would allow CDC to fund an additional 33 REACH recipients; and provides \$27 million for GHWIC to expand Tribal Epidemiology Centers for Public Health Infrastructure and continue the program's important work.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and your support for the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities to create a healthy and equitable future for all communities.

Sincerely,

ADAP Advocacy

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association on Health and Disability

American Heart Association

American Physical Therapy Association

American Physical Therapy Association of Minnesota

American Public Health Association

Association of Minority Health Professions Schools

Common Threads

Community Access National Network (CANN)

Equality California

Foundation for Healthy Generations

Good Days

Greater Flint Health Coalition

Health E Strategies LLC

Jump IN for Healthy Kids

Lakeshore Foundation

Mississippi Public Health Institute

National Association of County and City Health Officials

National Complete Streets Coalition

National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association

National Nurse-Led Care Consortium

National REACH Coalition

New Jersey Public Health Association

PlusInc

Prevent Blindness

Prevention Institute

Public Health Institute

Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness

Society for Public Health Education

The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health

The National Pancreas Foundation

The Praxis Project

Trust for America's Health

U.S. Breastfeeding Committee

Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials

Washington State Public Health Association

YMCA of the USA