

Our goal as a community of advocates is to demonstrate the importance of public health in communities around the nation. The following questions are designed to help start conversations about public health issues with policymakers at the local, state and federal levels. There are sample questions for each PHACT campaign focus area: public health funding, the Prevention and Public Health Fund, health impacts of climate change and child nutrition reauthorization.

The questions can be tailored to highlight local issues by providing local examples, your area of interest or expertise and concerns.

Note that the lists provided following certain questions are not exhaustive. Pick examples relevant to you and your community.

PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING

1. I am concerned about the future of our state and local public health workforce and the important services they provide in our state and communities. These services include *(Fill in with relevant services for your community — see list below for examples)*. Are you familiar with the public health programs that are funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration in *(name of community/city/state)*? Will you pledge to support adequate funding for these important agencies and replace austerity measures with a balanced approach to deficit reduction?
 - a. *Disease and injury prevention activities*
 - b. *Public health workers*
 - c. *Public health labs*
 - d. *Personnel at state and local health departments*
 - e. *Safety net for uninsured/assuring access to care*
 - f. *Cancer screening*
 - g. *Vaccine delivery programs*
 - h. *Tobacco prevention programs*
 - i. *Protecting the public from environmental toxins and other exposures*
 - j. *Food safety*
 - k. *Maternal and child health care programs*

2. Congress continues to underinvest in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration. These agencies provide funding for programs like *(Fill in with relevant programs for your community — see list below for examples)*. How can we reduce the economic and health-related costs of chronic and communicable disease and injuries when our nation is not investing in programs that prevent and treat these problems? Will you oppose future cuts to these critical programs? Will you commit to working with your House and Senate colleagues to replace current austerity measures with a balanced approach to deficit reduction?

- a. *Community health centers*
- b. *Obesity and tobacco use prevention*
- c. *Infectious disease prevention*
- c. *Emergency preparedness and response*
- d. *Health professions training and education*
- e. *Health education and outreach*

PREVENTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH FUND

1. It's been said that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The Prevention and Public Health Fund provides much-needed mandatory funding for programs at the local, state and federal levels to fight obesity, curb tobacco use, increase access to preventive care services and help state and local government respond to public health threats and outbreaks. Do you support maintaining funding for the prevention fund? Sequestration has led to indiscriminate cuts to discretionary and mandatory programs including the prevention fund — will you support a budget solution that replaces sequestration with a balanced approach to deficit reduction?
2. The Prevention and Public Health Fund was designed to increase the number of Americans who are healthy at every stage of life and has funded important programs to *(Fill in with relevant examples — see list below for some options)*. There are frequent proposals to cut, repeal or redirect the funding to other programs. Protecting the Prevention and Public Health Fund for its original purpose is essential to ensuring a strong and healthy nation by improving the public's health and restraining the rate of growth in health care costs. Will you take action to protect this important fund in the future?

Promote tobacco free living

Encourage healthy eating

Prevent lead poisoning

Detect and respond to infectious disease outbreaks

Expand access to breast and cervical cancer screenings

Prevent suicide

Prevent falls among older adults and adults with disabilities

CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH

1. Climate change and rising temperatures expose more Americans to conditions that result in illness and death due to respiratory illness, heat-related stress and insect-borne diseases. Through the Clean Power Plan, the Environmental Protection Agency has taken action to clean up carbon pollution from power plants — the nation’s single largest source of carbon pollution. Will you pledge to oppose any efforts in Congress to block or delay the EPA from moving forward with strong protections to reduce carbon pollution and other dangerous power plant emissions through the Clean Power Plan?
2. Climate change raises temperatures and makes smog pollution worse, triggering asthma attacks and permanently damaging and reducing lung function. These conditions fall most heavily on our most vulnerable communities, including children, older adults, those with serious health conditions and the poor. What actions will you take to ensure that we reduce carbon pollution and other harmful pollutants that cause respiratory and cardiovascular disease? Will you support funding to help our public health leaders develop plans to protect their communities from the health impacts of climate change?

CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION

1. Access to child nutrition programs is an important part of ensuring the health of kids today and of future generations, especially that of low-income children whose families may have limited access or resources to provide healthy food. Both the House and Senate are considering legislation to reauthorize these child nutrition and education programs that serve 18,000 schools and that have the potential to serve 11,000 additional high-poverty schools. The Senate bill would maintain healthy school meals in our schools while the House bill would significantly weaken school nutrition standards for meals and snacks and beverages and decrease access to school meals for low-income children. Will you pledge to strengthen child nutrition programs and oppose any efforts to roll back access to healthy school meals for our nation’s school children?
2. Great progress has been made in child nutrition programs — school meals now contain more nutritious fruits and vegetables and whole grains and less sugar, sodium and fat with 98 percent of schools meeting these improved standards. Congress has yet to reauthorize child nutrition programs, and the bill under consideration in the House would significantly weaken nutrition standards for school meals and would reduce participation in the program. What actions will you take to advance legislation that continues to raise the standards of health for our nation’s most vulnerable children and oppose efforts to weaken access to healthy school meals?



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