

COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

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Washington, DC—Coalition for Health Funding Executive Director issued the following statement following the release of a new version of the Community Health And Medical Professionals Improve Our Nation Act of 2017 (“Champion Act”):

“Community health centers, the National Health Service Corps, teaching health centers, and other primary care programs to be reauthorized by the CHAMPION Act are critical pillars of the public health continuum, providing essential health services to America’s most vulnerable. Unfortunately, the CHAMPION Act is another exercise in robbing Peter to pay Paul, tapping \$10.5 billion from the Prevention and Public Health Fund as an offset to this legislation.

Cutting the Prevention Fund by 75 percent over the next eight years to offset the CHAMPION Act undermines the core missions of the programs this legislation seeks to support, as programs supported by the Prevention Fund work in concert with primary care providers to keep Americans healthy. Today, the Prevention Fund comprises 12 percent of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) budget. CDC initiatives supported by the Prevention Fund help reduce the risk of lead poisoning, expand access to vaccines, and support breast feeding moms. Many of these programs could be part of the annual appropriations process, but the arbitrarily low cap on non-defense discretionary spending prevents any such action from occurring. Therefore, the Committee is relying on controversial offsets that endanger all these critical programs.

Together, CDC’s Prevention Fund initiatives and community health centers, the National Service Corps and other primary care programs are equally essential for preventing illness and injury, and for keeping children and families healthy.

It is for this reason the Coalition for Health Funding opposes this and any legislation that relies on the Prevention Fund as an offset. We urge Congress to do the same.”

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The Coalition for Health Funding is a nonprofit alliance working to preserve public health investments in the interest of all Americans. Our 95 member organizations together represent more than 100 million patients and consumers, health providers, professionals, and researchers.

<http://www.publichealthfunding.org>