

COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

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AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT WEAKENS HEALTH SECURITY

Washington, D.C., May 4, 2017 – The below is a statement from Emily J. Holubowich, Executive Director of the [Coalition for Health Funding](http://www.publichealthfunding.org).

“The House’s passage of the American Health Care Act today would have a devastating, direct impact on Americans’ health well beyond insurance coverage and health care access. In addition to the millions of Americans that will lose health insurance and the opportunity to receive supports and services that allow them to live full, healthy lives in the community, the bill will also repeal the Prevention and Public Health Fund—dealing a crushing blow to the already underfunded Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The Prevention and Public Health Fund is a critical source of funding for CDC, representing 12 percent of the agency’s overall budget and as much as 100 percent of some of the agency’s core programs. The Fund supports state and local public health efforts to immunize children, detect and prevent the spread of infectious disease outbreaks, and fight the leading causes of death such as heart disease. A cut of this magnitude would have ripple effects throughout the agency, and would likely spill over into other health agencies and programs—medical research, substance use treatment, workforce development—as lawmakers seek ways to fill the void left by Prevention Fund repeal.

As in the practice of medicine, the first goal of health reform should be ‘do no harm.’ Repeal of the Prevention and Public Health Fund not only does more harm than good, it unnecessarily cuts for cutting’s sake without regard for the side effects. It’s the federal government’s responsibility to protect and defend the American people against threats, both foreign and domestic. Shortchanging public health leaves Americans vulnerable to known health threats such as Zika virus, opioid addiction, antibiotic resistance, cancer, foodborne illness, lead poisoning, and those threats yet to be identified. Put simply, repealing the Prevention and Public Health Fund will compromise our nation’s health security.

We urge the Senate to closely consider the full range of negative impacts resulting from this bill and to work with all stakeholders to improve the health of our country.”

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The Coalition for Health Funding works to preserve and strengthen federal investments across the public health continuum. Founded in 1970, the Coalition’s diverse members organizations—representing more than 100 million patients and consumers, health providers, professionals, and researchers—speak with one voice before Congress and the administration in support of federally funded health programs with the shared goal of improved health and well-being for all.

<http://www.publichealthfunding.org>