

# COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

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## **RYAN BUDGET DRIVES A TANK OVER PUBLIC HEALTH**

In the budget blueprint released today, Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan states, “The first job of the federal government is securing the safety and liberty of its citizens from threats at home and abroad.” The Coalition for Health Funding couldn’t agree more. But it takes more than just the Department of Defense to protect Americans. Federal public health programs play a critical role in national security. Under Chairman Ryan’s budget our troops—and all Americans—pay the price.

Every day, in important ways most Americans don’t even realize, the federal government supports public health programs that keep them safe and secure. The agencies and programs of the Department of Health and Human Services conduct health research; prevent disease, disability, and injury; assure food and drug safety; protect and respond in times of crisis; educate the next generation of scientists, health care providers, and public health professionals; and provide our nation’s most vulnerable access to care. Chairman Ryan’s budget would further cut these and other critical domestic programs and redirect much of this funding to the Department of Defense.

Public health programs have already borne more than their fair share of the responsibility for deficit reduction, with a decade of scheduled funding cuts and sequestration that cuts even deeper. These programs are not the root cause of our fiscal crisis and cutting them further will only hinder our ability to prevent and respond to health threats.

“Chairman Ryan wants to protect the well-being of soldiers and their families, but our nation’s soldiers, like all Americans, rely on public health programs here on American soil,” said Emily Holubowich, Executive Director of the Coalition for Health Funding. “These programs discover cures for disease and keep our food and water safe. They provide needed mental health services to our returning wounded, and they help families rebuild their lives after natural disasters. Continued cuts to public health will do Americans more harm than good.”

Chairman Ryan in his budget strives to resolve “contradictions” in current defense policy, “between the threats we face and the resources we’ve committed to meeting them.” Public health programs face the same mismatch—an eroding public health infrastructure buckling under the weight of increased health demands.

The Coalition for Health Funding is a nonprofit alliance working to preserve public health investments in the interest of all Americans. Our 90 member organizations together represent more than 100 million patients, health care providers, public health professionals, and scientists.

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<http://www.publichealthfunding.org>