

COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

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Washington, D.C. – Following the longest shutdown in our nation’s history, some Members of Congress are proposing legislation to enable automatic continuing resolutions under the goal of preventing future shutdowns. Coalition for Health Funding Executive Director Emily Holubowich issued the following statement on the potential risks of these proposals:

The Coalition for Health Funding is deeply concerned that automatic continuing resolutions could inadvertently harm research, public health, and disability programs, as well as other domestic programs funded through the annual appropriations process. When the federal budget process breaks down and continuing resolutions (CRs) are the norm, it creates dysfunction and disruption across the entire public health continuum. New initiatives, innovations, and hires are put on hold. Procurement cycles lapse. Opportunities are lost. And ultimately, the American people are hurt. Automatic CRs would only exacerbate this uncertainty.

The country’s health landscape is ever changing as we face emerging and resurging infectious diseases, rising rates of chronic disease, addiction, and injuries, and fewer health care providers and professionals to address these challenges. Automatic CRs would not allow Congress to effectively execute their oversight authority and make necessary adjustments in funding to meet new demands—whether funding new programs, or eliminating funding for programs that are no longer needed.

Automatic CRs would also further reduce the importance of Congress passing annual spending bills, perpetuate budget uncertainty, and likely lead to funding cuts. Whether the automatic CR would freeze funding at the current year’s levels, or require a percentage of cuts, an automatic CR will lead to cuts in health funding.

The Coalition for Health Funding is deeply concerned about the impact of automatic CR proposals. An automatic CR is not a panacea to the political impasses that lawmakers face. Throughout our nation’s history, bipartisanship, compromise, and oversight are critical tools the legislative branch wields. Ceding this authority is shortsighted, and we therefore strongly encourage Congress and the Administration to work together to complete the appropriations process through regular order.

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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 92-member organizations together represent more than 100 million patients and consumers, health providers, professionals, and researchers.

<http://www.publichealthfunding.org>