

COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

Continuing Resolutions are Harmful to Public Health FY 2022 Appropriations Toolkit

With the fiscal year winding down, it is evident that Congress will have to pass a continuing resolution (CR) to prevent a government shutdown at the end of the fiscal year. As we have done in years past, CHF will advocate that Congress pass the FY 2022 appropriations bills as soon as possible!

We need your help to remind Congress about the importance of passing appropriations bills under regular order and the negative impact that long-term CRs have on public health and research.

Here's how you can help:

- Put out a call to action to your membership and ask them to email their Senators and Representative urging them to pass FY 2022 funding as soon as possible. A sample email can be found below, and should be tailored to your organization.
- Share information about upcoming town hall meetings (virtual or in person) with your membership so they can interact directly with their Senators and Representatives to urge them to pass the FY 2022 appropriations bills as soon as possible.
- Join CHF on social media in posting about how long-term CRs are harmful to public health on **September 1st!** Sample tweets can be found below and we encourage you to tweet examples that are specific to your organization (and the field, professionals, or patients you represent). Use the hashtag #fundhealth in your posts!
- Retweet CHF's tweets (@healthfunding). We will be tweeting details about how CRs are harmful for the public health community and encouraging Congress to pass FY 2022 bills as soon as possible.





Connecting in the District: Finding Town Halls

Connecting constituents with their Senators and Representatives is a powerful tool. Below are some instructions CHF member organizations can give to their communities about how to find and prepare for Town Hall meetings.

Instructions for Constituents:

Members of Congress often host “Congressional Town Hall Meetings” when they are back home as a way to hear directly from their constituents. August is a prime time for these events. During COVID, it is not uncommon for members to host “virtual” Town Hall events to hear from their constituents when they are unable to be face-to-face. These events offer an excellent opportunity to interact directly with Members of Congress and urge them to pass the FY 2022 appropriations bills as soon as possible.

How to find out if your member is hosting a town hall meeting:

- Check your Member of Congress’ website, Facebook page or Twitter feed to find out the date and location of future meetings. Go to www.house.gov and www.senate.gov and enter your zip code to be directed to the appropriate website.
- If no information is listed on the website, call the Member of Congress’ local office in your town/state. The phone number should be listed on his/her website.
- You can also check your local newspaper for announcements about upcoming town hall meetings, “office hours” or special events for constituents. Town hall meetings are often not announced very far in advance and additional events are sometimes added to the schedule at the last minute.
- Note any instructions about registering for the meeting or sending an RSVP and follow them carefully.
- Be prepared to provide your name, address and phone number that will be used to verify that you are a constituent.

Prepare for the meeting:

- Visit your Member of Congress’ website, Facebook page or Twitter feed and read their latest press releases, speeches, newsletters, and/or tweets to find out how they’ve voted recently and which issues they are currently following.
- Write down 1 or 2 brief statements or questions that you would like to present to your Member of Congress. Be sure to be specific.

Connecting Digitally: Action Alerts and Social Media

Sample Action Alert

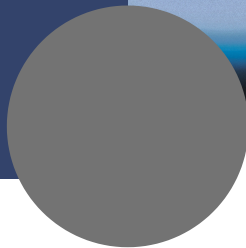
Dear [Senator/Representative] [NAME],

I am writing to you today on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION], to urge you and your colleagues to work together to pass the FY 2022 spending bills as soon as possible. CRs, especially those that are long-term, harm public health, research and various domestic programs that are funding through the annual appropriations process.

Normalizing and relying on long-term CRs creates dysfunction and disruption across the entire public health continuum. For example [EXAMPLE SPECIFIC TO ORGANIZATION].

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions you have about how this issue impacts [PROFESSION] in your [DISTRICT/STATE].

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME]



Sample Tweets

- CHF members are sharing why it's important for Congress to pass FY 2022 spending bills and avoid a long-term CR. Follow along at #fundhealth to learn more about CRs' impact on public health
- Long-term CRs are detrimental to the public health continuum, CHF sent this letter to #Congress urging them to pass the FY 2022 spending bills and #fundhealth.
- CRs are a means to end. They harm public health. It's more important now than ever that Congress works together to pass FY 2022 appropriations and #fundhealth!
- Shutdowns are bad for public health, but so are long-term CRs. Predictable and sustainable funding for programs is required to address our nation's health care needs. Congress must work together to #fundhealth by passing the FY 2022 appropriations bills
- Make your voice heard! Tell Congress why long-term CRs are bad for the [PROFESSION/ORGANIZATIONAL AREA] community. Click here to send an email to your members of Congress today. [INCLUDE LINK TO ACTION ALERT ON ORGANIZATION'S WEBSITE].

How CRs Impact Public Health: Stories from Our Members

CHF asked our member organizations how CRs are detrimental to their communities. Here's what they had to say:

- Managing government grants becomes extremely challenging during a CR, our partners often rely on government funding (i.e. state and local agencies); when their funding is frozen during a CR it means we have to delay deliverables and pause work.
- Our organizations' staff are often worried about the continuation of grant funding (i.e. their salaries) when we are operating under a CR. Understandably, it is hard to keep the team motivated and keep the project moving forward.
- CRs, especially those that are long term, can delay funding for necessary services. For example, states are slated to receive significant increases in funding to assist in prevention, treatment, and recovery services in FY 22. The longer these funds are delayed by a CR, the more lives will be lost.
- With CRs, it becomes incredibly difficult for health departments to plan activities and hire staff. It also causes delays at the federal agencies in distributing funds, which is even more of an issue for health departments that depend on dollars passed through from the states. It becomes an incredibly time intensive and delayed process, which holds up programmatic work in communities across the country.
- CRs, especially lengthy ones, have forced population scientists to either postpone or cancel longitudinal survey research. Timing issues are vital, especially for longitudinal surveys, to ensure ongoing participation by participants and the integrity of evidence. When operations are postponed or canceled, researchers can lose contact with participants, which jeopardizes the composition of respondents in the sample, especially among those from vulnerable or transient populations who are hardest to stay connected with.
- Under the terms of most CRs, agencies like the NIH and NSF have been precluded from awarding new research grants or contracts. Such delays hamper scientific progress by stalling new research activities and necessary administrative tasks, including hiring staff and recruiting study participants. Depending on the length of a CR, scientists may even be forced to rewrite their studies' specific aim. This can have a long-term effect on research efforts.
- During long-term CRs, funding agencies, such as the NIH, tend to adopt conservative funding policies, preventing existing awards from being funded at their fully awarded level. While these funding "cuts" are often modest and temporary, scientists are required to adapt and make difficult decisions about what aspects of their research and operations to curtail. These decisions impact scientific findings.
- During long-term CRs, scientists have had to terminate lower-level staff positions, impacting the livelihood and training careers of graduate students and administrative staff.