

# COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

September 10, 2021

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary of Health and Human Services  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra:

The Coalition for Health Funding—an alliance of 81 nonprofit organizations working to promote strong investments in the public health continuum—is concerned that billions of dollars in funding dedicated to the COVID-19 pandemic are being repurposed to help finance the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' response to the growing number of unaccompanied immigrant children crossing the border. The Coalition fully understands and supports the need to care for immigrant children and families, but redirecting funding during a public health emergency is deeply troubling.

The COVID-19 crisis is far from over. Redirecting COVID-19 supplemental funding to another priority—no matter how important—is short sighted as federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial public health programs continue to respond to the growing number of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations. The Delta variant is a real threat and we anticipate that, unless further investments are made to contain the virus, we will continue to face new and possibly more serious threats. Furthermore, public health agencies still require resources to increase the number of individuals vaccinated, the only way to truly put this pandemic behind us.

Public health departments across the country are fighting this pandemic after years of underfunding. We have consistently asked our public health system to do more with less and we have underfunded essential programs that today are critical to our COVID-19 response. Emergency funding has been critical to the response and while states are using their funding at different speeds, pulling back any of these resources will be detrimental to our ongoing efforts to end the pandemic and save American lives.

The Coalition urges you to reconsider the transfer of COVID-19 funds to other priorities and requests an update from HHS on how much of the COVID-19 supplemental funding remains unspent and what plans the agency has to obligate it. We look forward to hearing from you soon and would welcome any questions you have. Please feel free to reach out to me directly at [emorton@dc-crd.com](mailto:emorton@dc-crd.com).

Sincerely,



Erin Will Morton  
Executive Director  
Coalition for Health Funding