



February 9, 2009

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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The Honorable David Obey
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

The American Lung Association strongly supports HR 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, as passed by the U.S. House of Representatives. This much-needed legislation contains life-saving health program funding that will improve public health, prevent disease and importantly create jobs.

The American Lung Association strongly supports at least \$3 billion for funding the prevention and wellness programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including a \$500 million investment into evidence-based clinical and community-based prevention and wellness strategies, known as the Healthy Communities Program. Investing in prevention will enable the implementation of the most effective programs to improve health and reduce health care costs. To stimulate job creation in the health field and fully capitalize on the opportunity to promote health, we respectfully request the House of Representatives demand that these programs be funded at least at the House-passed levels.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death. Nearly 400,000 Americans die each year from tobacco-caused disease. Funds to address the terrible burden caused by tobacco use are particularly important. As a nation, we must reduce the number of children who begin to smoke and the number of people who die from tobacco-related diseases. Funding for prevention and wellness will also serve to lessen tobacco's financial burden on the U.S., which totals more than \$192 billion annually in healthcare costs and economic productivity losses.

Thousands of state and local public health jobs across the country are at risk or have already been lost. This investment in our public health infrastructure will save jobs, create new jobs and protect our nation's public health infrastructure at this very critical time.

Sincerely,

Charles D. Connor
President & CEO

Cc. The Hon. Nancy Pelosi
The Hon. Steny Hoyer
The Hon. James Clyburn
The Hon. Barney Frank
The Hon. Bart Gordon
The Hon. George Miller
The Hon. James Oberstar
The Hon. Charles Rangel
The Hon. John Spratt
The Hon. Edolphus Towns
The Hon. Nydia Velazquez
The Hon. Henry Waxman