



February 25, 2011

United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator:

Trust for America's Health (TFAH) urges you to oppose the deep cuts to federal public health programs contained in H.R. 1, and to oppose any such cuts to other FY2011 spending measures that may come before the Senate. These programs conduct activities that are essential to the health and well-being of our country.

TFAH is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public health advocacy organization dedicated to saving lives by making disease prevention a national priority. While we understand the difficult challenges facing the nation regarding the current federal deficit, the cuts proposed under H.R. 1 will have significant consequences for public health for many years to come.

At a time when today's children are in danger of becoming the first generation in American history to live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents, cutting funding to programs aimed at protecting the public from epidemics and health hazards, preventing disease, and promoting wellness will be harmful.

As you know, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and other agencies perform crucial functions that improve the health and well-being of the American people. Their combined efforts provide immunizations to children, protect our food and water supply, create clean air, detect and monitor emerging infectious diseases, prevent disease, address health disparities for vulnerable populations, and prepare for and respond to disasters, acts of bioterrorism and other health emergencies.

H.R. 1, as passed by the House of Representatives, would have the net effect of imposing cuts in excess of 20 percent on agencies like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This is the result, in part, of the approval of a series of amendments to the bill leaving no funding available from the historic Prevention and Public Health Fund from which the Department of Health and Human Services has already allocated \$750 million for a significant number of impactful public health programs addressing issues highlighted in the previous paragraph.

The Prevention and Public Health Fund (supported by well over 500 national, state and local organizations – please see [attached](#)) is intended to make much needed investments in prevention and public health programs that would create jobs and help lower long-term health care costs. It runs directly contrary to public support for these types of initiatives -- a public opinion survey conducted by TFAH and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) found that 71 percent of Americans favored an increased investment in disease prevention.





Once again, we urge you to oppose the substantial cuts to public health in H.R. 1. Due to the growing burden of chronic disease, our country faces exploding health care costs that diminish our economic productivity and limit businesses' ability to compete in a global economy. This would further exacerbate a public health system that remains less than prepared to respond to the impact of chronic and infectious diseases, and possible acts of bioterrorism that confront our nation. We must make prevention a top priority, and turn our sick care system into a disease prevention system. Now is the time to increase, rather than decrease our ability to adequately protect our nation's health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Levi".

Jeffrey Levi, PhD  
Executive Director

