



Prevention Strategy, Investment Fund and Related Provisions (Senate Bill)

Seventy-five percent of health care costs go toward the treatment of chronic disease, and obesity alone is estimated to cost us almost \$147 billion per year. Chronic diseases cost the U.S. an additional \$1 trillion each year in lost productivity. Injuries are the leading cause of death for Americans ages one through 44 and cost more than \$117 billion per year. Health care costs will never be reduced until we improve the health and safety of Americans.

The Senate bill, through its creation of a National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy and the Prevention and Public Health Investment Fund, would reorient our health system towards prevention of disease and injury, where our focus and our dollars should be expended.

National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy - The federal government does not currently have any structure or plan that coordinates health policy across government to assess our public health status, establish national priorities, and identify health goals and objectives. The Strategy in this bill would accomplish those goals.

The Prevention and Public Health Investment Fund created in this bill would be a dedicated funding stream for public health and prevention that is needed to meet the many emerging health threats we must face and persistent chronic disease and injury rates.

- The Fund would build upon what works, but also test new approaches to promoting prevention and wellness. It would ensure accountability by evaluating new programs that are funded and would enable us to prioritize prevention and health, instead of just treatment. But it does not earmark every dollar because the prevention needs of the nation may change over time. It is necessary to have the flexibility to direct money where it will do the most good, in proven health and safety interventions.
- The Fund could support existing chronic disease and injury prevention programs – like the CDC’s nutrition, physical activity and obesity program, and the school health program – which are currently only in half of states – and injury prevention programs – which are in just 30 states..
- The Fund could help fight obesity and chronic disease and injury by funding community transformation grants, which are competitive grants authorized in the bill that must focus on reducing chronic disease rates and addressing health

disparities. These grants are flexible yet accountable – by requiring proven, evidence-based approaches and an evaluation.

- Baby Boomers have higher obesity rates than previous generations. The bill authorizes a healthy aging pilot program to target preventive health to the pre-Medicare population. The Fund could support healthy aging programs and help improve the health and safety of this population before they age into Medicare.
- Immunizations are cost-effective and save lives. The bill would expand access to immunizations, and the Fund could help support that crucial investment.
- The HELP bill also authorizes the Preventive Task Forces, which provide the information needed to make the best decisions about preventive health.