June 17, 2015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Thoracic Society (ATS), I'm writing to voice our strong opposition to any effort to use the Prevention and Public Health Fund as an offset to pay for H.R. 1190. The Pitts Amendment, which would be considered passed upon enactment of the rule to H.R. 1190, would severely cut funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund. We urge you to protect the critical investment in prevention and public health that the Fund ensures.

The ATS is a 15,000 member scientific medical organization dedicated to the prevention, detection, treatment and cure of respiratory disease, critical care illness and sleep-related disorders through research, clinical care and advocacy. As physicians and healthcare professionals who diagnose and treat tobacco-related diseases such as COPD and lung cancer, the ATS strongly supports public health programs aimed at reducing tobacco use. Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., responsible for one in five deaths annually. State and community-based smoking cessation programs and education campaigns have been shown to effectively reduce tobacco use, lower healthcare costs through the prevention of chronic tobacco-related diseases and save lives. But smoking cessation programs are currently underfunded. The Prevention and Public Health Fund provides states and communities with the support to expand these important efforts.

Please vote no on any measure which would repeal or reduce funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

Sincerely,

Atul Malhotra, M.D.
President
American Thoracic Society