



Oregon Public Health Association

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www.OregonPublicHealth.org

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Dear Senator Wyden:

On behalf of the Oregon Public Health Association I write in strong opposition to repealing the Prevention and Public Health Fund. We are highly concerned that the fund may be repealed as part of the larger effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The fund is meant to expand and sustain national investment in prevention and public health programs, which is absolutely necessary to improve the health of people in Oregon, and to slow the rise of health care costs.

Oregon faces significant health and fiscal challenges that could be mitigated by a better and more reliably funded public health system. The fund is a vital part of the effort to create such a system. Since 2010, the fund has already provided Oregon with more than \$43 million to support a variety of public health activities. In FY 2016, the fund provided Oregon with over \$9 million.

These funds were used to create or maintain programs that are critical to providing the foundational capabilities that Oregon is aiming to provide for every one of our citizens at the local and state levels. There are currently NO State General fund dollars that would make up the difference. Given Oregon's estimated budget deficit of \$1.4 billion, funds are not expected to be designated to keep any of these programs running if federal dollars disappear. Oregon has long had a paucity of state general fund support for public health, making our state even more vulnerable to the effects of federal funding reductions than most other states.

Here is a small sampling of new, unique programs Oregon has implemented, all of which will be more effective, save more lives, and reduce healthcare expenses if they can be maintained over time.

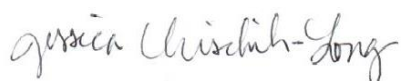
- American Indian Tribes and Alaskan Native villages received resources to provide a holistic approach to preventing heart disease, diabetes, and stroke in a culturally relevant manner.
- In one year, a statewide program of partners screened over 400 women for cervical and breast cancer, including low income women and women living in remote, rural areas.
- Oregon was able to participate in the national "Tips from Former Smokers" campaign on how to quit smoking. In just one week, Oregon saw a 53% increase in calls to 1-800-Quit Now. This campaign alone has resulted in a 12% increase in attempts to quit and prevented 17,109 premature deaths nationwide.
- Funds have been used to create youth and Native American suicide prevention programs.

Repealing the prevention fund without providing a corresponding increase would result in a major loss of funding for core public health programs. The fund makes up more than 12 percent of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's annual budget, and is integral to helping the state keep communities healthy and safe. Here is a summary of the foundational programs currently supported by the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Again, if this funding is taken away, program functions will either end or be severely compromised.

- Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program: Prevents lead poisoning among children through outreach, education, and statewide surveillance of blood lead levels; coordinates follow up with local physicians to ensure proper care for affected children.
- Diabetes and Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention: Supports partnerships among local public health authorities and coordinated care organizations to implement programs to prevent chronic disease among Oregon adults.
- Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity: Provides training, data and quality control for statewide outbreak investigations; promotes injection safety among local public health authorities and providers; and provides laboratory testing for non-influenza respiratory viruses, allowing investigation of respiratory illness outbreaks in schools, healthcare facilities and workplace settings.
- Emerging Infections Program: Supports statewide control of healthcare acquired infections; allows for collection of data on pneumococcal disease, group A and B streptococcal infections, meningococcal disease and foodborne illnesses; and provides surveillance and laboratory testing for pertussis, influenza and HPV.
- Section 317 Immunization Program: Provides state-level capacity for Oregon's immunization program, including vaccine safety, monitoring of immunization rates, compliance with Oregon's school immunization law, and response to vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks, including seasonal influenza.
- Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant: Provides technical assistance to local and tribal public health authorities, including compliance reviews of all 34 local public health authorities and support for state and local public health accreditation efforts. Provides resources to three communities for sexual violence prevention.
- Quit Line Capacity Grant: Enhances tobacco quit line services by targeting disproportionately burdened populations through media outreach and removal of barriers to access.
- Personal Responsibility Education Program: Supports implementation of evidence-informed programs designed to prevent unintended pregnancy and transmission of sexually-transmitted infections among high risk youth in Oregon, including youth in foster care and corrections facilities, homeless youth, and youth that identify as Latino or LGBTQ.
- Youth Suicide Prevention Program: Provides the only local suicide prevention funding to five counties and ten health and behavioral health systems working to implement comprehensive Zero Suicide initiatives.

We strongly urge you to oppose any effort to repeal the prevention fund and look forward to working with you to achieve a healthier nation.

Sincerely,



Jessica Nischik-Long, MPH
Executive Director