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Public Health Leaders Make Urgent Joint Call to Protect Prevention and Healthcare

Joint Statement from American Public Health Association, Prevention Institute, Public Health Institute and Trust for America's Health

The fight to protect public health is more important than ever.

The Senate is moving quickly—and secretly—on their version of legislation to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA). While we don't know the content of the bill, we do know that the House-passed repeal bill—the American Health Care Act—would cause 23 million people to lose their healthcare, restructure Medicaid, pare down essential benefits like maternity and newborn care, result in the loss of over a million American jobs, and zero out the Prevention and Public Health Fund. **As leaders of organizations dedicated to protecting and advancing the public's health, we call on Congress now to protect federal investments in public health funding, the Prevention and Public Health Fund, and affordable, high-quality healthcare.**

Public health is at the very core of keeping our country safe, healthy, resilient, and secure. It works behind the scenes to ensure we have clean water to drink, safe food to eat, and healthy air to breathe. It works to safeguard us from infectious diseases like measles or Ebola by preventing the onset or spread of disease. It builds on time tested strategies to reduce the toll of chronic diseases and injuries. Public health works to redress long-standing inequities in health and safety, by investing in communities of greatest need. Through prevention, evidence-based treatment of substance use, prescription drug monitoring, and improved opioid prescribing, public health can solve the opioid epidemic, which kills ninety-one Americans a day. From opioid overdoses to rising infant and maternal mortality rates, Americans are seeing both the length and quality of their lives decline—and we need more, not fewer, investments in public health to turn the tide.

Repealing the ACA and its investments in public health and prevention dismantles the capacity of public health to do its work. The pain will be felt in every state, every congressional district, and every neighborhood, and those who are most vulnerable will suffer the most. If the Prevention Fund is eliminated, over the next five years states stand to lose over \$3 billion they rely on to prevent chronic disease, halt the spread of infections, and invest in the community resources that support health and safety. Repealing the ACA and the Prevention Fund ensures there is no progress to reduce healthcare spending or improve the health of our workforce. Repealing the ACA will result in an America where preventable suffering and death are more

widespread, and an America where the poorest and sickest communities fall even farther behind.

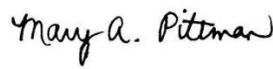
A strong public health infrastructure is at the very core of making our country safe, healthy, and secure. We need to act now to protect it.



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