



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

July 24, 2019

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write to express our support for H.R. 3877, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019. This important legislation would raise the austere spending caps under the final two years of the Budget Control Act of 2011 to provide \$56.5 billion in additional funding for nondefense discretionary programs over fiscal years 2020 and 2021, including programs critical to improving and protecting the public's health.

Congress has supported bipartisan agreements to raise the spending caps and prevent devastating cuts to nondefense discretionary programs in the past and it is essential that members come together in a bipartisan manner again to ensure adequate funding is available for these important programs. If Congress fails to act to raise the caps, nondefense discretionary funding will be cut by \$55 billion below current levels in FY 2020. Such cuts would devastate many important public health programs including those that prevent chronic and infectious diseases, protect the nation's food supply, protect our communities from environmental health threats and ensure a strong and diverse public health workforce.

While we support this legislation, we are disappointed that the bill would extend the sequester of mandatory non-exempt programs including for the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevention fund provides critical resources for programs at the local, state and federal levels that fight obesity, curb tobacco use, increase access to immunizations and prevent childhood lead poisoning. We strongly urge Congress to work to end these cuts and to restore the prevention fund to its originally intended level of funding.

The health of the American public depends upon a strong and adequately resourced public health system. We urge your support for this important legislation and for increased funding for critical public health programs as you work to finalize the FY 2020 appropriations process before the end of the current fiscal year. Thank you for your attention to our views on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georges C. Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director