

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

We respectfully ask that you fund the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s National Asthma Control Program at \$30 million in the FY 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. This level represents an additional \$1.0 million in funding. Additional funding above current funding levels is necessary to ensure CDC continues to meet the needs of the funded states and to address the burden of asthma.

It is more important than ever to provide the resources necessary to fight asthma. Asthma affects over 26 million Americans, including 6.1 million children.<sup>1</sup> In addition to its toll on health, asthma imposes a huge financial cost, resulting in annual health care expenditures, lost productivity, and mortality totaling \$81.9 billion.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, asthma causes 13.8 million missed school days and 10.1 million missed workdays every year.<sup>3</sup>

The National Asthma Control Program at the CDC tracks asthma prevalence, promotes asthma control and prevention, and builds capacity in state and community health programs. The National Asthma Control Program funds projects in 24 states and Puerto Rico. Funding the National Asthma Control Program at \$30.0 will ensure the program can continue to meet the needs of funded-states.

This program trains educators and health professionals to diagnose, treat, and manage asthma. It teaches children and their families to recognize, prevent, and control symptoms and assists school districts in implementing asthma management programs and developing asthma policies for students. Created in 1999, the National Asthma Control program has been highly effective, contributing to a decrease in the asthma mortality rate by 41 percent,<sup>4</sup> despite a growth of asthma prevalence.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ALA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Asthma Program

<sup>2</sup> Nurmagambetov TA, Kuwahara R, Garbe P. The Economic Burden of Asthma in the United States, 2008-2013. *Ann ATS*, 2018; doi: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.201703-259OC.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. National Health Interview Survey, 2013. Analysis performed by the American Lung Association Epidemiology and Statistics Unit using SPSS software.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. CDC WONDER On-line Database, compiled from Compressed Mortality File 1999-2016 Series 20 No. 2V, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. National Health Interview Survey, 2016. Analysis performed by the American Lung Association Epidemiology and Statistics Unit using SPSS software.

As you consider the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill for FY2019, we urge you to fund the National Asthma Control Program at \$30.0 million. These funds will help to reduce the burden of asthma and continue to keep our communities and children healthy. Significant advancements have been made over the last decade in the fight against asthma, and the National Asthma Control Program is essential to maintain this momentum.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



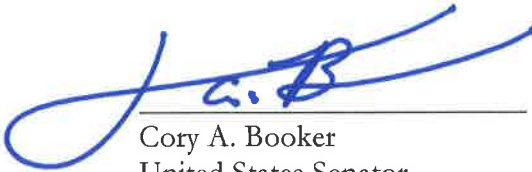
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United States Senator



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Timmy Baldwin  
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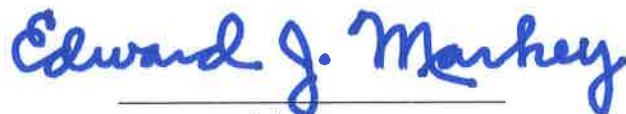
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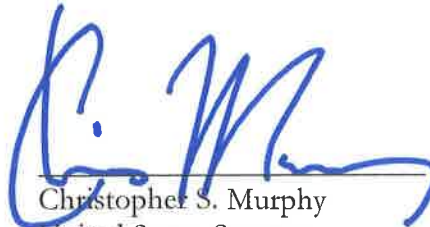
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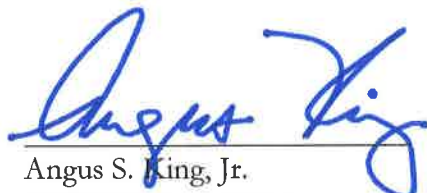
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