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The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

We write to ask that you consider funding the Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at \$60 million in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2023.

Alzheimer's disease is a public health crisis; more than 6 million Americans are living with the disease, with nearly 14 million people expected to be diagnosed with Alzheimer's by 2050. Women and communities of color bear a disproportionate burden, with women making up two-thirds of Alzheimer's cases. By 2030, nearly 40 percent of all Americans living with Alzheimer's will be Black or Latino.

Alzheimer's not only takes a toll on patients and their families, it also has a significant economic impact. Without early intervention and treatment, care costs are projected to exceed \$20 trillion over the next 30 years.

Research has found that up to 40 percent of dementia cases can be attributed to modifiable risk factors, meaning that with a robust public health response dementia could be delayed, and possibly prevented, by early intervention. Risk and protective factors for dementia include hypertension, exercise, social engagement, smoking, hearing loss, depression, traumatic brain injury, diabetes, obesity and education.

This research recently led to a historic update of our nation's plan to address Alzheimer's as authorized by the National Alzheimer's Project Act. In December of 2022, HHS Secretary Becerra updated the plan and added a new goal: Accelerate Action to Promote Healthy Aging and Reduce Risk Factors for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias. Achieving this goal will require funding and coordination, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is on point to provide both.

The CDC Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program (ADHAP) is the only place within the CDC dedicated specifically to the promoting the health of older Americans across multiple chronic conditions. ADHAP is the central locus for addressing health equity challenges across chronic conditions that share common risk factors. Yet, in FY 2021, total funding for this work represented about 0.25 percent of the overall CDC budget, standing at \$20.5 million.

As Congress works to draft the Labor-HHS appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2023, the undersigned organizations request an increase for the Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program to \$60 million, to allow for urgently needed investment in infrastructure, health promotion, coordination of healthy aging efforts across the agency and a proactive focus on addressing the social determinants of health and health disparities. This request is consistent with our support for overall tripling of the investment in CDC's Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

Specifically, this funding will support the CDC Alzheimer's and Healthy Aging program work to:

- strengthen programs that reduce risk, promote health equity, and support populations with a high burden of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), including the Healthy Brain Initiative
- build public health infrastructure through BOLD Act initiatives that increase early detection and diagnosis, reduce risk, and support dementia caregiving
- expand capacity in state, tribal and territorial public health departments to promote the health of older adults within an age-friendly public health system
- coordinate the implementation of the new, sixth goal of the National Alzheimer's Plan to Accelerate Action to Promote Healthy Aging and Reduce Risk Factors for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia
- fund applied research and translation for public health practice
- support public health strategies for addressing the social determinants of health that contribute to disparities in healthy aging and brain health

The Administration and the scientific community have identified Alzheimer's disease (the most common form of dementia) as a priority area – with good reason. Dementia ranks at the top of fears of aging Americans and is on track to triple by 2060. It is the only top-10 cause of death in the U.S. With no known cure. ADRD research is critical, particularly because ADRD is a public health challenge that is intricately connected to other chronic conditions.

Significant investment is needed to ensure that we are increasing not only lifespan but also health span. Any efforts to improve pandemic preparedness and prevent the spread of infectious disease must also include efforts to prevent chronic disease, address health disparities and, ultimately, improve underlying health and wellness for older Americans.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to increase support for the CDC's work to promote healthy aging and reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Niles Godes at [ngodes@usagainstalzheimer.org](mailto:ngodes@usagainstalzheimer.org).

Sincerely,