



March 10, 2020

Chairwoman Nita M. Lowey
House Appropriations Committee
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Kay Granger
House Appropriations Committee
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro
Labor Health and Human Services
and Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Tom Cole
Labor Health and Human Services
Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairwoman Lowey, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger and Ranking Member Cole,

On behalf of the undersigned members of the COPD Coalition, we strongly urge you to consider language in the House FY21 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill that would create a \$5 million grant program for chronic diseases activity within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion budget for FY2021. We believe the creation of a chronic disease grant program will spur needed creativity and program activity for a wide range of important chronic disease conditions, like COPD, in the U.S. that have been underappreciated by CDC.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, refers to a group of diseases that cause airflow blockage and breathing-related problems. It includes common conditions like emphysema and chronic bronchitis and more rare diseases like alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency. Chronic lower respiratory disease, primarily COPD, is the 4th leading cause of death in the U.S. Almost 15.7 million Americans (6.4%) reported they have been diagnosed with COPD, although the NIH estimates there are an additional 12-15 million Americans who have undiagnosed COPD. Unlike most chronic diseases in the U.S., COPD rates are increasing.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not have a dedicated program to respond to COPD. The creation of a CDC COPD program is a priority goal outlined in the federal COPD National Action Plan released in May 2017.

While the undersigned organizations are disappointed that a COPD specific program at CDC does not yet exist, we would like to thank the House Appropriations Committee for creating a competitive program in the FY20 L-HHS bill. The House provision would have allowed organizations to compete for CDC grants to address chronic diseases and specifically lists COPD as a potential candidate for competitive funding. While the provision was not in the final FY20 L-HHS bill, we are hopeful that both House and Senate Appropriators will consider providing \$5 million in the FY21 funding cycle.

We believe that creating a competitive chronic disease funding mechanism program will help address the many unmet needs in chronic disease prevention and management, including COPD. We urge you to provide \$5 million to create a competitive chronic disease funding mechanism within CDC's National Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion as part of the FY21 L-HHS appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Alpha-1 Foundation
American Association for Respiratory Care
American Lung Association
American Thoracic Society
COPD Foundation
Dorney-Koppel Foundation
U.S. COPD Coalition