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# THE 317 COALITION

November 9, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Blunt and Cole and Ranking Members Murray and DeLauro:

Thank you for your leadership on our nation's immunization network in your work on the Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations Subcommittees. As you move into conference for the fiscal year 2018 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, we urge you to fund the national immunization program authorized under Section 317 of the Public Health Service Act at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at \$606,972,000, the level included in the Senate bill.

Vaccines are one of the greatest success stories in public health and are among the most cost-effective ways to prevent disease. Indeed, we know that for each dollar invested in the U.S. childhood immunization program, there are over ten dollars of societal savings and three dollars in direct medical savings. Moreover, childhood immunizations over the past twenty three years have prevented 381 million illnesses, 855,000 early deaths, and \$1.65 trillion in total society costs.

However, purchasing vaccines is not enough to protect a population. A robust immunization infrastructure is required to support programs such as Vaccines for Children, which relies upon the critical infrastructure and operations funded through Section 317 to effectively serve its target population: the 54% of American children, nearly 45 million, who get their vaccines for free every year through this program. The Section 317 program also serves as the backbone of our nation's public health infrastructure, supporting the science that informs our national immunization policy; providing a safety net to uninsured, poor adults for vaccine purchases; monitoring the safety of vaccines; educating providers and performing community outreach; and conducting surveillance, laboratory testing, and epidemiology to respond to disease outbreaks.

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In 2014, CDC reported 644 cases of measles across 27 states, the largest number of cases since the elimination of measles in the United States in 2000. CDC estimates that it can cost more than \$140,000 to contain each individual case of measles.

Unfortunately, that outbreak was not the end. During the spring and summer of 2017 a new outbreak in Minnesota left 79 people, 73 of whom were children, with measles. The Section 317 program supported the rapid response effort and continues to support local and state public health capacity for surveillance, detection and response.

In August of 2016, the CDC submitted a report to Congress which shows that the Section 317 program is not adequately funded to carry out its essential public health mission of protecting Americans from preventable diseases. Providing additional funding for the Section 317 program in FY 2018 would ensure access to cost-effective prevention measures to help keep Americans healthy. We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Alameda County California  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Public Health Association  
Arkansas Immunization Action Coalition  
Association of Immunization Managers  
Autism Science Foundation  
Boost Oregon  
California Academy of Family Physicians  
California Immunization Coalition  
California School Nurses Organization  
City of Laredo Health Department (TX)  
Colorado Academy of Family Physicians  
Colorado Children's Immunization Coalition  
Connecticut Immunization Program  
Dane County Immunization Coalition (WI)  
EverThrive Illinois  
Every Child By Two  
Henderson County Immunization Coalition (NC)  
Immunization Action Coalition  
Immunization Action Coalition of Washington  
Immunization Task Force - Metro Omaha  
Immunize Nevada  
Immunize Ohio  
Indiana Immunization Coalition  
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic in Houston, TX  
Kentucky Immunization Coalition  
Langlade County Immunization Coalition (WI)  
Maine Immunization Coalition  
March of Dimes

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Meningitis Angels  
Mid America Immunization Coalition  
Migrant Clinicians Network  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases  
National Meningitis Association  
NET Immunization Coalition: Northeast Texas Public Health District/Smith County  
New Jersey Immunization Network  
PKIDS  
Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative  
San Francisco Immunization Coalition  
Snohomish Health District (WA)  
Super Shot  
Task Force for Global Health  
The Arizona Partnership for Immunization  
The Immunization Partnership  
The Kimberly Coffey Foundation  
Trust for America's Health  
Tulsa Area Immunization Coalition  
Vaccinate California  
Vaccine Awareness Coalition/Gregg County Health Department-Immunizations  
Vaccine Education Center at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
WithinReach  
WV Immunization Network, a program of The Center for Rural Health Development, Inc.