

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2014

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in supporting the vital role of the Colorectal Cancer Control Program (CRCCP) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by signing our bipartisan letter to the House Committee on Appropriations. We are requesting funding of at least \$55 million to allow prevention and awareness initiatives to reach more Americans throughout the country.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. This year, more than 140,000 Americans will be newly diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and more than 50,000 will die from the disease. While a vast majority of colorectal cancer cases can be prevented through regular screenings, the CDC estimates that one in three Americans between the ages of 50 and 75 are not up-to-date.

The CRCCP was established specifically to address disparities in colorectal cancer screening rates and to improve access to underserved populations. The majority of the program funds are targeted at screening promotion through education and awareness. The remaining funds are used to provide screenings and follow-up care to low-income men and women aged 50-64 who are underinsured or uninsured.

For FY 2014, the CRCCP is funded at \$42 million and currently supports programs in 25 states and four tribal regions. A funding level of \$55 million would restore the CDC's CRCCP funding to its FY 2010 level of \$45 million and fund a new \$10 million CDC cancer demonstration program aimed at innovative strategies to increase population screening rates for colorectal, breast and cervical cancers.

Dozens of organizations representing physicians, researchers, and patients have committed to eliminating colorectal cancer as a major public health problem and are working toward the shared goal of reaching 80 percent of Americans screened for colorectal cancer by 2018. Congress can join that effort by supporting increased funding for colorectal cancer prevention programs at the CDC in FY 2015.

We encourage you to support our efforts toward saving lives and reducing the suffering associated with this preventable disease by joining this letter **no later than COB on March 31, 2014**. For more information or to sign onto this letter, please contact Tom Saunders in Rep. Payne, Jr.'s office at Thomas.Saunders@mail.house.gov (5-3436) or Katie Brown in Rep. Fitzpatrick's office at Katie.Brown@mail.house.gov (5-4276).

Sincerely,



DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.
Member of Congress



MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK
Member of Congress

April XX, 2014

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you begin consideration of the Fiscal Year 2015 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we respectfully ask that you fund colorectal cancer prevention programs at \$55 million in FY 2015. A funding level of \$55 million would restore the Centers Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Colorectal Cancer Control Program (CRCCP) funding to its FY 2010 level of \$45 million and fund a new \$10 million demonstration program aimed at innovative projects that support increased screening rates for colorectal, breast and cervical cancers.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States, killing more non-smokers than any other cancer. This year, approximately 140,000 Americans will be newly diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and more than 50,000 will die from the disease. Yet, colorectal cancer is largely preventable thanks to effective screening methods. The CDC estimates that one in three Americans between the ages of 50 and 75 are not up to date with recommended screening.

The CRCCP currently provides funding to 25 states and four tribal organizations across the United States for the purpose of increasing colorectal cancer screening rates among men and women age 50 years and older. The majority (two-thirds) of CRCCP funds are used for public education and outreach strategies, although funded sites can use up to one-third of funds to provide no-cost colorectal cancer screenings to eligible low-income men and women ages 50 to 64 who are underinsured or uninsured. While improvements to insurance coverage will make colorectal cancer accessible to more Americans, access does not guarantee better screening adherence. A number of barriers contribute to low colorectal cancer screening rates, such as lack of awareness and misinformation about screening – not just lack of health coverage. A well-funded colorectal cancer control program is needed to support important screening awareness and education initiatives targeted at both insured and uninsured populations across the country.

The biggest barrier to reducing death and suffering from colorectal cancer is educating the American public that colorectal cancer is preventable and early detection is possible with adherence to screening at recommended intervals. If everybody aged 50 or older had regular screening tests, as many as 60 percent of deaths from colorectal cancer could be prevented. Dozens of organizations representing physicians, researchers, and patients have committed to eliminating colorectal cancer as a major public health problem and are working toward the shared goal of reaching 80 percent of Americans screened for colorectal cancer by 2018. Congress can join that effort by supporting increased funding for colorectal cancer prevention programs at the CDC in FY 2015. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,