

July 14, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The undersigned members of the Injury and Violence Prevention Network urge to maintain current funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (Injury Center) by **providing at least \$236 million to the Injury Center in the FY 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill**. Despite being one of the smallest centers at CDC, programs administered by the Injury Center are critically important to states as they work to design and implement targeted injury and violence prevention programs in their communities.

Injuries and violence are the leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of one to forty-four, regardless of gender, race, or socioeconomic status. Nevertheless, our health system remains largely focused on the treatment and prevention of disease and largely ignores the massive burden of injuries and violence. As a country, we are paying an enormous price for our failure to prioritize programs that advance injury and violence prevention. Each year, injuries and violence account for:

- 192,000 deaths – nearly 1 person every 3 minutes;
- 3 million hospitalizations;
- 27 million emergency department visits; and,
- \$671 billion annually in medical and work loss costs.

The Injury Center administers a wide range of prevention programs including the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS), sports youth concussions, youth violence, prescription drug misuse, motor vehicle crashes, and falls. The vast majority of Injury Center funding flows directly to states to support their unique injury and violence prevention needs. **A recent study by the Safe States Alliance noted that nearly half of state injury and violence prevention personnel are funded with federal dollars.**

A prime example of how Injury Center funding supports state injury and violence prevention needs is the prescription drug overdose epidemic. In FY 2016, Congress allocated \$70 million to the Injury Center to help tackle the rise in prescription drug overdose deaths. The Injury Center had sufficient funds to provide direct support to just 29 states through its *Prevention for States* program, which aims to help states advance in four key areas: maximizing prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs), strengthen community or insurer/health systems interventions, promote policy evaluations, and facilitate rapid response projects. By directing this funding to the Injury Center, Congress recognized that the technical assistance required to make the *Prevention for States* program a success is found in the expertise of the Injury Center workforce.

Now is not the time to pull back our investments in injury and violence prevention efforts. **Please work to ensure that states continue to receive the resources and expertise provided by the Injury Center to advance injury and violence prevention by providing at least \$236 million to the Injury Center in the FY 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill.**

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please contact Paul Bonta, Safe States Alliance's Director of Government Relations at Paul.Bonta@Safestates.org or 202-679-8646.

Sincerely,