

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

January 13, 2010

The Honorable David Obey
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

On behalf of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) – and the more than 2,800 local health departments across the nation that work every day to prevent disease, promote wellness, and protect health – I am writing to thank you for your leadership on the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (LHHS) Appropriations Subcommittee and for providing increased funding for two key public health programs in the final Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 LHHS Appropriations bill. In addition, I would like to reiterate NACCHO's appreciation for the FY 2009 supplemental funding Congress provided to address the current H1N1 threat. The nation faces unprecedented fiscal challenges, and the nation's local health departments very much appreciate your allocation of these much-needed additional resources, which will help them rebuild their capacity after years of erosion of federal support.

As you know, local health departments need a stable stream of annual funding to support their vital day-to-day operations, allowing ongoing involvement in disease prevention and health promotion activities while also sustaining standard preparedness initiatives. The funding you provided in the final FY 2010 LHHS bill will help local health departments to meet existing and increasing demands. Specifically, I would like to thank you for providing \$715 million for Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreements and \$5.3 million for the Advanced Practice Centers program; together, these initiatives support local health departments in their efforts to safeguard the health and well-being of the communities they serve and also bolster their capacities to respond to any emergency that threatens human health.

Thanks to your leadership and support, in FY 2010, local health departments will be better able to prepare for – and respond to – the wide variety of public health challenges they face each day. I very much value your advocacy on behalf of the nation's local health departments and stand ready to be a resource. I have asked Eli Briggs, NACCHO's Senior Government Affairs Specialist to respond to any requests for additional information. She may be reached at 202/507-4194, ebriggs@naccho.org.

Wishing you and your staff all the best in the new year.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Pestronk, MPH
Executive Director

