

December 21, 2017

The Honorable Eric Hargan  
Acting Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
330 C Street SW  
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Acting Secretary Hargan:

Our organizations were deeply concerned to read the reports in the [Washington Post](#) starting on Friday, December 15, 2017, that Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) budget analysts were informed they are discouraged from using seven words – including “vulnerable,” “entitlement,” “diversity,” “transgender,” “fetus,” “evidence-based” and “science-based” – as they prepare the President’s Fiscal Year 2019 budget. As the nation’s premier public health agency, the CDC cannot carry out its mission of improving the health and safety of all Americans when its staff are urged to avoid using basic phrases that are so intrinsic to public health.

CDC serves as the command center for the nation’s public health defense system against emerging and reemerging infectious diseases, and other threats to health and safety. From aiding in the surveillance, detection and prevention of the Zika virus to playing a lead role in the control of Ebola in West Africa and detecting and responding to cases in the U.S., to monitoring and investigating disease outbreaks to pandemic flu preparedness, to addressing chronic diseases. CDC is the nation’s – and the world’s – expert resource and response center, coordinating communications and action and serving as the laboratory reference center. States, communities and the international community rely on CDC for accurate information and direction in a crisis or outbreak. In the United States, CDC serves as a leader in the federal-state-local public health enterprise, which encompasses state, territorial and local health agencies that protect the public every day. None of this can occur unless CDC is able to convey who is at risk, what the risk is and how the science dictates the risk be addressed using established language – including the seven words as appropriate.

Science is the bedrock of sound public health and medical decision-making – and it should not be subject to partisan politics. HHS – including CDC – will not be successful in improving the health of Americans affected by these conditions if there is political interference – real or perceived – whether it be aimed at language or at undermining key scientific principles and policies. Our organizations urge the Department of Health and Human Services to assure the Department’s public health professionals and the public that science – and descriptions of it – remain at the heart of its mission. We look forward to your response clarifying these troubling reports.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days  
AAHIVM  
Academic Pediatric Association  
Academy for Eating Disorders  
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
AcademyHealth

Action for a Better Tomorrow - Sauk Valley  
Action on Smoking and Health  
Addiction Connections Resource  
Advocate Medical Group  
Advocates for Better Children's Diets  
Advocates for Youth  
African American Health Alliance  
Alaska Public Health Association  
Ali Forney Center  
Allergy & Asthma Network  
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of HIV Medicine  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Directors of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association of Health and Disability  
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Council on Exercise  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering  
American Lung Association  
American Medical Student Association  
American Muslim Health Professionals  
American Pediatric Society  
American Podiatric Medical Association, Inc.  
American Public Health Association  
American Sexual Health Association  
American Society for Microbiology  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene  
American Statistical Association  
American Thoracic Society  
Arkansas Public Health Association  
Asian Services In Action  
Association of Accredited Public Health Programs  
Association of Black Cardiologists  
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care  
Association of Ohio Health Commissioners, Inc.

Association of Population Centers  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Baltimore City Health Department  
Big Cities Health Coalition  
Blue Ridge Pride Center, Inc.  
Boston Public Health Commission  
Boulder County Public Health  
Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center  
Brooklyn Community Pride Center  
Building Home Together  
CAEAR Coalition  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
California Public Health Association-North  
Callen-Lorde Community Health Center  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands  
Celmatix Inc.  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Center on Halsted  
Center on Social Disparities in Health, University of California, San Francisco  
CenterLink  
Chicago Department of Public Health  
Children's Environmental Health Network  
Cleveland Department of Public Health  
Coalition for Health Funding  
Colorado Children's Immunization Coalition  
Colorado Health Institute  
Community Health Councils  
Connecticut Public Health Association  
Contact Wellness Foundation  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
CRI International Center for Biotechnology  
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation  
Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association  
Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology, Michigan State University  
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation  
Detroit Wayne County Health Authority (d.b.a. Authority Health)  
Doctors for America  
Dorchester County Health Department  
Drexel University Dornsife School of Public Health  
East Bay Refugee Forum  
Element Health, Inc.  
Entomological Society of America  
Equality New York  
EverThrive Illinois

Ferring Pharmaceuticals  
FORGE, Inc.  
Friends of the Earth  
Futures Without Violence  
Gay & Lesbian Center of Bakersfield  
Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center  
GC University Lahore  
Georgia Public Health Association  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality  
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative  
Hawaii Public Health Association  
Health Resources in Action  
HealthHIV  
Henry Ford Medical Group  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Hispanic Federation  
HIV Medicine Association  
HLN Consulting, LLC  
Homeowners Against Deficient Dwellings  
Human Impact Partners  
Identity Youth Center  
Illinois Public Health Association  
Immunization Action Coalition  
Immunize Nevada  
Indivisible Brookfield  
Indivisible Carbondale  
Indivisible Illinois  
Indivisible South Suburban Chicago  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Institute for Basic Research  
Institute of Systems Biology  
Iowa Public Health Association  
IQ Products  
Jacobs Institute of Women's Health  
JASMYN  
Juneau Biosciences, LLC  
Kansas City, Missouri Health Department  
Kentucky Population Health Institute  
KFSHRC  
Lakeshore Foundation  
Latino Commission on AIDS  
LGBT Center OC  
LGBT Detroit  
LGBT Network  
LGBTQ Law Project of NYLAG  
Local Public Health Association of Minnesota  
Long Island Crisis Center  
Long Island Gay and Lesbian Youth (LIGALY)

Long Island LGBT Community Center (The Center)  
Long Island Pride  
Louisiana Public Health Association  
Lung Cancer Alliance  
Lynchburg Diversity Center  
Magee-Womens Research Institute  
March of Dimes  
Maricopa County Department of Public Health  
Mazzoni Center  
Medical Students for Choice  
Missouri Public Health Association  
MJH Grant Consulting  
Montgomery County Health Department  
Montana Public Health Association  
NARAL Pro-Choice America  
NASTAD  
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research  
National Association for Health and Fitness  
National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems  
National Association of Councils on Development Disabilities  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Black Nurses Association  
National Blood Clot Alliance  
National Center for Health Research (NCHR)  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for LGBT Health  
National Coalition of STD Directors  
National Collaborative for Health Equity  
National Consumers League  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Health Law Program  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Medical Association  
National Network of Public Health Institutes  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives  
National Recreation and Park Association  
National Tuberculosis Controllers Association  
National Women's Health Network  
Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors  
Nevada Public Health Association  
New Hampshire Public Health Association  
New Mexico Public Health Association  
New Mexico Public Health Institute

New Progressive Alliance  
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology  
North Carolina Public Health Association  
North County LGBTQ Resource Center  
North Dakota Public Health Association  
Ohio Public Health Association  
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Oregon Public Health Association  
Origins FTD, Inc.  
Out Alliance  
Pacific Pride Foundation  
PAI  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Pennsylvania Public Health Association  
People For the American Way  
Physicians for Reproductive Health  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Population Association of America  
Power to Decide  
Pregnancy Specialty Center of Texas  
Prevent Blindness  
Prevention Institute  
Pride and Joy Families/Lesbian and Gay Family Building Project  
Pride at Work  
Pride Center of the Capital Region  
Pride for Youth  
Program on Endocrine Disruptor Strategies, Commonweal  
Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment  
Progressive Congress Action Fund  
Projects for Environmental Health, Knowledge, & Action, Inc.  
Public Citizen  
Public Health Advocates  
Public Health Association of Nebraska  
Public Health Association of NYC  
Public Health Institute  
Public Health Justice Collective  
Pulmonary Fibrosis Advocates  
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition  
Rainbow Center  
Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness  
Research!America  
Resource Center  
Results for America  
Robinson Research Institute  
S2AY Rural Health Network  
Sacramento LGBT Community Center

Safe States Alliance  
SAGE  
San Antonio Metropolitan Health District  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation  
School-Based Health Alliance  
Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders - Long Island (SAGE-LI)  
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)  
SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators  
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society for Public Health Education  
Society for Reproductive Biology  
Society for the Study of Reproduction  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
South Carolina Public Health Association  
Southern Tier AIDS Program  
Southwest Center for Health Innovation  
Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision  
Spina Bifida Association  
State Key Laboratory of Reproductive Medicine, Nanjing Medical University  
SunServe  
Sustainability and Health Equity Lab/University of California, Berkeley  
Texas Association of City & County Health Officials  
The AIDS Institute  
The Arc of the United States  
The Center: 7 Rivers LGBTQ Connection  
The Consortium  
The Cortland LGBTQ Center  
The Empowered Patient Coalition  
The Feinstein Institute for Medical Research  
The Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada  
The Immunization Partnership  
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center  
The LGBT Center of Greater Reading  
The LGBTQ Center of Long Beach  
The LOFT LGBT Center  
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health  
The National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable  
The Pride Center at Equality Park  
The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital  
The San Diego LGBT Community Center  
The Source LGBT+ Center  
The Trevor Project  
The University of Texas Medical Branch  
Transgender Law Center  
Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund  
Trust for America's Health

Truth Initiative  
UC Irvine Center for Occupational and Environmental Health  
University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute  
University Reproductive Associates  
USDA-ARS  
Utah Public Health Association  
Vermont Public Health Association  
Washington County Gay Straight Alliance, Inc.  
Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials  
Washington State Public Health Association  
Welcome Back Initiative  
West Suburban Action League  
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition  
West Valley Neighborhoods Coalition  
Whitman-Walker Health  
Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health  
Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards  
Wisconsin Public Health Association  
Woodstock Institute  
Youth Outlook  
Youth OUTright WNC, Inc.

Cc: Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention