



October 15, 2009

The Honorable Barack H. Obama  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Trust for America's Health (TFAH), a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to saving lives by protecting the health of every community and working to make disease prevention a national priority, strongly urges your advocacy in support of inclusion of, and mandatory funding for, the Prevention and Public Health Fund currently under consideration by Congress as part of health reform.

**In your February 24<sup>th</sup> address before a joint session of Congress, you referred to the wellness and prevention provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act as “the largest investment ever in preventive care, because that is one of the best ways to keep our people healthy and our costs under control.”** Under the Affordable Health Choices Act in the Senate, and America's Affordable Health Choices Act in the House, a Prevention and Public Health Fund would build upon that investment by providing a more long-term sustained investment in improving America's health.

In September, TFAH and The New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM) released *The Compendium of Proven Community-Based Prevention Programs*. The report documents that community-based prevention programs work and highlights examples from an extensive literature review that NYAM conducted of peer-reviewed studies evaluating the effectiveness of community-based disease prevention programs designed to reduce tobacco use, increase physical activity, and/or improve eating habits. The *Compendium* also includes examples of evidence-based community prevention programs that have helped reduce rates of asthma, falls among the elderly and sexually-transmitted diseases.

From skyrocketing chronic disease rates to food safety issues to disease outbreaks, like H1N1, our public health system is constantly confronting new challenges without adequate resources. The Prevention and Public Health Fund would help to reorient our system from a reactive, treatment-centered approach to a system focusing on wellness and health promotion. We have the opportunity to make a major course correction in the way our country delivers and promotes health. Toward that end, we urge you to ensure inclusion of, and mandatory funding for, a Prevention and Public Health Fund in health reform legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Levi".

Jeffrey Levi, PhD  
Executive Director