April 12, 2017

Dear Representative Burgess, Representative DeGette, Senator Crapo, and Senator Cardin:

The undersigned 117 organizations, representing healthcare groups, associations, patients, and employers, would like to express our support for the Preventive Health Savings Act.

We share the conviction that the way in which the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) currently "scores" legislation severely constrains the ability of policymakers to accurately assess legislation that would prevent chronic disease and promote behavioral health across the life-course. We agree wholeheartedly with existing bipartisan agreement on the need for a continued focus on wellness and disease prevention if health is to be improved and healthcare costs are to be contained. We believe this legislation represents a significant step toward this goal.

Chronic diseases and behavioral health challenges place a significant burden on our health and economy, but they can be reversed.

- Chronic diseases are responsible for 7 of 10 deaths among Americans each year, and they account for more than 80 percent of the \$2.7 trillion our nation spends annually on medical care. These figures will worsen as the population ages.
- Much of the illness, suffering, and early death related to chronic diseases and behavioral health challenges are caused by modifiable health risk factors, such as lack of physical activity, poor nutrition, and tobacco and substance use.
- Preventing or delaying the onset of new cases and mitigating the progression of chronic diseases and behavioral health challenges will improve the health of Americans while lowering healthcare costs and overall spending.

The current scoring process does not give Congress a complete picture of efforts to combat chronic disease and promote life-course behavioral health.

- Research has demonstrated that certain expenditures for preventive medicine generate savings when considered in the long term, but those cost savings may not be apparent when assessing only the first ten years—those in the "scoring" window.
- Long-term benefits from current preventive health expenditures may not be fully reflected, if at all, in cost estimates from CBO. For example, a study published in the July 2016 edition of *Medical Research Archives* found that a lifestyle intervention program for patients with prediabetes led to health and economic rewards that extended beyond CBO's current scoring window.

- The Washington State Institute for Public Policy's economic analyses has found that a number of population-level behavioral health interventions would offer substantial returns on investment in saved health care dollars, reduced use of public benefits, and increased tax revenue from greater productivity, but often outside of today's scoring window – preventing Congress from being able to realize these benefits for America.
- Lawmakers need sound information to be good stewards of our country for decades ahead, and today's methods and procedures may not work as well as needed in analyzing certain efforts to prevent costly complications of chronic diseases and the gains that come from promoting behavioral health.

CBO has already begun to examine prevention in new ways.

- In 2012, CBO published long-term estimates of the effect of a hypothetical tobacco tax on the federal budget.
- In 2013, CBO published a study which found greater prescription drug access and adherence can reduce healthcare costs in other areas.
- Beginning in the 114th Congress, CBO has responded to a new House of Representatives requirement to score certain large bills by taking into account projected impacts on revenue and spending from assumed economic effects of the bills.

The Preventive Health Savings Act will permit leaders in Congress to request that CBO estimate the long-term health savings that are possible from preventive health initiatives.

- This legislation provides that the Chairman or Ranking member of either budget or health-related committees can request an analysis of the two 10-year periods beyond the existing 10-year window.
- The bill requires CBO to conduct an initial analysis to determine whether the provision would result in substantial savings outside the normal scoring window.
 - CBO must include a description of those future-year savings in its budget projections, but would retain the option of creating a formal projection that includes some or all of the budgetary outyears.
 - This bill is necessary to bring greater attention to the longer-term value of wellness and prevention policies specifically.
- The bill defines preventive health as an action designed to avoid future healthcare costs that is demonstrated by credible and publicly available epidemiological projection models, incorporating clinical trials or observational studies in humans.

 This narrow, responsible approach discourages abuse while encouraging a sensible review of health policies and programs Congress believes will further public health.

As the chronic disease epidemic continues to worsen and rates of suicide and opioid overdose continue to climb, so does the need for legislation that will properly allow Congress to see the full savings of enacting prevention-focused measures. We applaud your efforts in sponsoring this important legislation and look forward to joining with you in transforming our nation to one that prioritizes efforts to achieve wellness and wellbeing.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

ACT – The App Association

Aetna

Alliance for Aging Research

Allscripts

Alzheimer's Association

Alzheimer's Impact Movement (AIM)

America's Essential Hospitals

America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP)

American Art Therapy Association

American Association for Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation (AACVPR)

American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC)

American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE)

American Association of Diabetes Educators

American Association on Health and Disability

American Clinical Laboratory Association (ACLA)

American College of Gastroenterology

American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine

American College of Preventive Medicine

American College of Radiology

American Council on Exercise

American Diabetes Association

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Medical Association

American Optometric Association

American Osteopathic Association

American Pharmacists Association

American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA)

American Psychological Association

American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery

AmerisourceBergen Corporation

AMGA

Amgen

Ascension Health

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare

Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies

Baxter

Biocom

BioReference Laboratories

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee

Boehringer Ingelheim

California Life Sciences Association

Cancer Support Community

Cardinal Health

Clinical Social Work Association

Connected Health Initiative

Council for Affordable Health Coverage

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

Diabetes Hands Foundation

Dialysis Patient Citizens

Eating Disorders Coalition

Eisai

Eli Lilly and Company

Endocrine Society

Facing Addiction

Hazelden Betty Ford Institute for Recovery Advocacy

Healthcare Leadership Council

HealthyWomen

IHRSA: International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association

Indiana University Health

Johnson & Johnson

Lakeshore Foundation

Leidos

Lewin and Associates LLC

Marshfield Clinic

Maxim Healthcare Services

MemorialCare Health System

Mental Health America

Merck

National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations

National Assn for Rural Mental Health

National Assn of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors

National Association for the Self-Employed

National Association of ACOs

National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)

National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems

National Association of Social Workers

National Association of Spine Specialists

National Coalition on Health Care

National Consumers League

National Council on Aging

National Kidney Foundation

National Restaurant Association

National Retail Federation

NCTA-The Rural Broadband Association

Nestle Health Science

Novartis

Novo Nordisk

Obesity Action Coalition

Obesity Medicine Association

Obesity Society

Omada Health

Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease

Patients Rising

Pediatric Endocrine Society

Pfizer

PhRMA

Premier healthcare alliance

Prescriptions for a Healthy America

Prevent Cancer Foundation

Redstone Center

Rite Aid

Sanofi US

SCAN Health Plan

Society for Women's Health Research

Sports & Fitness Industry Association

Stroll Health

Takeda Pharmaceuticals

Texas Health Resources

Third Way

UAW Retiree Medical Benefits Trust

Underwriters Laboratories INC.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNAA)

Vizient

Weight Watchers

YMCA of the USA