

September 15, 2010

To Members of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform:

As the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform develops its policy recommendations, the undersigned education, training, disability, public health, medical research, patient advocacy, women's, children's, civil rights, anti-poverty, faith and labor organizations respectfully urge you to take a balanced approach to deficit reduction, consider the profound consequences that one-sided cuts to discretionary spending would have on our nation's global competitiveness and our capacity to address the needs of the most vulnerable. We implore you to consider opportunities to both reduce federal spending and also raise federal revenue in your approach to reduce the deficit. In so doing, we urge you to look beyond nondefense discretionary spending—which represents less than half of all discretionary spending—as a vehicle for deficit reduction.

We believe recent efforts in Congress, as well as the President's call for cuts in non-security discretionary spending, are shortsighted. Such efforts disproportionately restrict investments for critical domestic programs and immeasurably harm America's most vulnerable who rely on the federal government to provide basic and necessary services, particularly in these times of economic hardship. Furthermore, such efforts will not substantially reduce the deficit, nor make a dent in the national debt, as nondefense discretionary programs comprise only 19 percent of all federal outlays in Fiscal Year 2010. Indeed, the real costs of these cuts far outweigh the perceived fiscal benefits.

Health, education, labor enforcement, job training, children's and social services programs are continually asked to do more with less. These domestic programs have experienced significant erosion over the past several years despite their important role in keeping Americans healthy, productive, competitive, and secure. As a result, America's status as a global superpower has been compromised. We are one of the sickest nations, ranking 45th in infant mortality—widely recognized as a basic indicator of a country's overall health—behind even some developing countries. America is also falling behind our industrialized counterparts in scholastic achievement. Scores from the 2006 Program for International Student Assessment showed that U.S. 15-year-olds trailed 16 of 30 countries in science, and 23 countries in math. Our nation still faces large and unacceptable gaps by race and socio economic status in student achievement and high school graduation and college completion rates.

In addition, additional investments in many health and education programs will actually help the economy and have a positive impact on the deficit through reduced costs of treatments for diseases, increased earnings for those with higher levels of education, and reduced expenditures for unemployment and other social service programs.

A nondefense discretionary spending freeze at this time would have a devastating effect on the well-being of our nation, would cripple the nation's ability to address the mounting needs of our nation's most vulnerable, and would further undermine our global competitiveness.

We hope in your ongoing deliberations you will consider the costs of discretionary spending cuts, and the value of health, education, labor enforcement, job training, children's and social

services in improving the lives of American families and strengthening our nation's global position. We look forward to working with the Fiscal Commission as it develops its policy recommendations. If you have questions about this letter, please contact Emily Holubowich, Executive Director, Coalition for Health Funding ([eholubowich@dc-crd.com](mailto:eholubowich@dc-crd.com) or 202.484.1100) or Joel Packer, Executive Director, Committee for Education Funding ([jpacker@cef.org](mailto:jpacker@cef.org) or 202.383-0083).

Sincerely,

1. Academy of General Dentistry
2. Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses
3. Academy of Radiology Research
4. AIDS Action
5. AIDS Action Baltimore
6. AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth and Families
7. Alliance for Aging Research
8. Alliance for Excellent Education
9. Alpha-1 Association
10. Alpha-1 Foundation
11. American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology
12. American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing
13. American Academy of Family Physicians
14. American Academy of Pediatrics
15. American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
16. American Association for Cancer Research
17. American Association for Dental Research
18. American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
19. American Association for Health Education
20. American Association for Respiratory Care
21. American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
22. American Association of Anatomists
23. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
24. American Association of Colleges of Nursing
25. American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
26. American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
27. American Association of School Administrators
28. American Association of University Women
29. American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
30. American College of Clinical Pharmacy
31. American College of Physicians
32. American College of Preventive Medicine
33. American Council on Education (ACE)
34. American Counseling Association
35. American Dental Education Association
36. American Diabetes Association
37. American Epilepsy Society

38. American Federation for Medical Research
39. American Federation of School Administrators
40. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees
41. American Foundation for Suicide Prevention/SPAN USA
42. American Heart Association
43. American Institute for Medical and Biomedical Engineering
44. American Lung Association
45. American Medical Student Association
46. American Medical Women's Association
47. American Mental Health Counselors Association
48. American Music Therapy Association
49. American Nurses Association
50. American Organization of Nurse Executives
51. American Physiological Society
52. American Podiatric Medical Association
53. American Psychiatric Association
54. American Psychological Association
55. American Public Health Association
56. American School Counselor Association
57. American School Health Association
58. American Social Health Association
59. American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
60. American Society for Nutrition
61. American Student Association of Community Colleges
62. American Urogynecologic Society
63. amfAR – The Foundation for AIDS Research
64. Arthritis Foundation
65. ASPIRA Association
66. Association for Career and Technical Education
67. Association for Clinical Research Training
68. Association for Patient-Oriented Research
69. Association for Radiologic & Imaging Nursing
70. Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology
71. Association of Academic Health Centers
72. Association of Academic Health Science Libraries
73. Association of Departments of Family Medicine
74. Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
75. Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
76. Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
77. Association of Population Centers
78. Association of Public Health Laboratories
79. Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
80. Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors
81. Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
82. Association of University Centers on Disabilities
83. Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

84. AVAC: Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention
85. Benign Essential Blepharospasm Research Foundation
86. Break the Cycle
87. California Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors
88. California Foundation for the Advancement of Addiction Professionals
89. Campaign for Public Health
90. Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
91. CARES Foundation, Inc.
92. Charles Drew University
93. Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
94. Clinical Research Forum
95. Clinical Social Work Association
96. Coalition for Health Funding
97. Coalition for Health Services Research
98. Coalition for Imaging and Bioengineering Research
99. Colon Cancer Alliance
100. Colorado Association of Secondary School Principals
101. Colorectal Cancer Coalition
102. Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service
103. Committee for Education Funding
104. CommonHealth ACTION
105. Connecticut Certification Board
106. Consortium of Social Science Associations
107. Cooley's Anemia Foundation
108. COPD Foundation
109. Corporation for Supportive Housing
110. Council for Exceptional Children
111. Council for Opportunity in Education
112. Council of Accredited MPH Programs
113. Council on Social Work Education
114. Counseling Association
115. Defeat Diabetes Foundation
116. Digestive Disease National Coalition
117. Directors of Health Promotion and Education
118. Dystonia Advocacy Network
119. Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
120. Easter Seals
121. Education Law Center
122. Epilepsy Foundation
123. Faces & Voices of Recovery
124. Family Violence Prevention Fund
125. Family Voices
126. FED ED
127. Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences
128. First Focus
129. Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network

130. Foundation for Suicide Prevention/SPAN USA
131. Friends of AHRQ
132. Friends of NCBDDD at CDC
133. Friends of NCHS
134. Friends of SAMHSA
135. Genetic Alliance
136. Genetics Society of America
137. Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association
138. HealthHIV
139. Hepatitis B Foundation
140. Hepatitis Foundation International
141. HIV Medicine Association
142. Howard University Health Sciences
143. Human Rights Campaign
144. Immune Deficiency Foundation
145. Infectious Diseases Society of America
146. Institute for Public Health Innovation
147. International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium
148. International Society for Technology in Education
149. Interstitial Cystitis Association
150. Jeffrey Modell Foundation
151. Jewish Women International
152. Knowledge Alliance
153. Legal Momentum
154. Lupus Research Institute
155. Magnet Schools of America
156. March of Dimes Foundation
157. Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals
158. Meharry Medical College
159. Mental Health America
160. Morehouse School of Medicine
161. NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals
162. National AHEC Organization
163. National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
164. National Alliance of Black School Educators
165. National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors
166. National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
167. National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
168. National Association for College Admission Counseling
169. National Association for Geriatric Education
170. National Association for Music Education
171. National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems
172. National Association for Sport and Physical Education
173. National Association of Children's Hospitals
174. National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
175. National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists

176. National Association of County and City Health Officials
177. National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
178. National Association of Geriatric Education Centers
179. National Association of Local Boards of Health
180. National Association of Medical Minority Educators, Inc.
181. National Association of Mental Health Planning & Advisory Councils
182. National Association of Private Special Education Centers
183. National Association of School Psychologists
184. National Association of Secondary School Principals
185. National Association of Social Workers
186. National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors
187. National Association of State Directors of Special Education
188. National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
189. National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
190. National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
191. National Business Coalition on Health
192. National Coalition for Cancer Research
193. National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery
194. National Coalition of STD Directors
195. National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
196. National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
197. National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions
198. National Council of Jewish Women
199. National Council of Women's Organizations
200. National Disability Rights Network
201. National Education Association
202. National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
203. National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
204. National Foundation for Mental Health
205. National Health Council
206. National Hispanic Medical Association
207. National HEP/CAMP Association
208. National Kidney Foundation
209. National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges
210. National Network to End Domestic Violence
211. National Nursing Centers Consortium
212. National Organization for Women
213. National Osteoporosis Foundation
214. National Psoriasis Foundation
215. National PTA
216. National Rural Health Association
217. National School Boards Association
218. National Spasmodic Dysphonia Association
219. National Spasmodic Torticollis Association
220. National Spinal Cord Injury Association

221. NCLR (National Council of La Raza)
222. North American Primary Care Research Group
223. Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs
224. Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
225. Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN)
226. Partnership for Prevention
227. Pediatric Stroke Network, Inc.
228. Phi Delta Kappa International
229. Physician Assistant Education Association
230. PKD Foundation
231. Planned Parenthood Federation of America
232. Population Association of America
233. Project DOCC - Delivery of Chronic Care
234. Project Inform
235. Public Education Network
236. Public Health Solutions
237. PXE International
238. Research!America
239. Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition
240. Safe States Alliance
241. Sarcoma Foundation of America
242. School Administrators Association of New York State
243. Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States
244. Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
245. Society for Clinical and Translational Science
246. Society for General Internal Medicine
247. Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America
248. Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
249. Society for Neuroscience
250. Society for Public Health Education
251. Society for Women's Health Research
252. Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
253. Society of State Directors of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
254. Society of Teachers of Family Medicine
255. Special Olympics International
256. TASH
257. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)
258. The American Brain Coalition
259. The Commission on Adult Basic Education
260. The Arc of the United States
261. The Endocrine Society
262. Titan Emergency Group
263. Tourette Syndrome Association, Inc.
264. Treatment Action Group
265. Trust for America's Health
266. U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association

- 267. United Cerebral Palsy
- 268. United Church of Christ Justice & Witness Ministries
- 269. United Spinal Association
- 270. WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
- 271. YMCA of the USA