

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 8, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

As you prepare the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, we urge you to provide \$1.13 billion for the national immunization program authorized under Section 317 of the Public Health Service Act at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Vaccines are one of the greatest success stories in public health and are among the most cost-effective ways to prevent disease. Indeed, we know that for each dollar invested in the U.S. childhood immunization program, there are over ten dollars of societal savings and three dollars in direct medical savings. Moreover, childhood immunizations over the past twenty years have prevented 381 million illnesses and 855,000 deaths, and saved nearly \$1.65 trillion of dollars in societal costs. Unfortunately, millions of children and adults have missed routine vaccinations due to the pandemic, putting years of success in jeopardy.

The Section 317 immunization program acts as the backbone of our nation's public health system by supporting the science that informs our national immunization policy, providing a safety net to uninsured, poor adults for vaccine purchases, monitoring the safety of vaccines, educating providers and performing community outreach, and conducting surveillance, laboratory testing, and epidemiology to respond to disease outbreaks. A robust immunization infrastructure – in addition to the vaccines – is imperative to support programs such as Vaccines for Children (VCF). VCF relies upon the critical infrastructure and operations funded through the Section 317 program to effectively serve millions of American children each year.

An effective vaccine campaign is critical to controlling COVID-19, requiring the establishment and maintenance of a robust public health immunization infrastructure. Data reporting challenges, limited workforce, lack of enrolled adult providers, vaccine hesitancy, and health disparities have hampered the efficient rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Increased and sustained investment is needed to modernize immunization information systems (IIS), establish state-to-state IIS data sharing, increase and sustain a network of adult immunization providers reporting data into IIS, and engage with communities to build vaccine confidence and reduce disparities.

Control of COVID-19 will likely include confronting virus variations and the potential need for booster or annual COVID vaccinations, like annual flu vaccination. Providing \$1.13 billion for the Section 317 Program in FY 2022 would sustain the improvements made through the emergency supplemental bills to ensure both routine immunization is restored and future preparedness is assured. We greatly appreciate your consideration of this vital request.

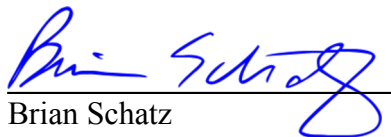
Sincerely,



Jack Reed  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



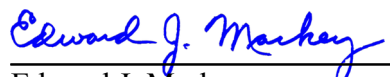
Tina Smith  
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



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Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



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Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



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Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator




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Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator



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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



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Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



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Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



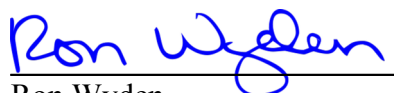
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Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

/s/ Dianne Feinstein

Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator