

General Talking Points in Favor of Prevention

- Overarching talking point: Health reform isn't just about cutting costs -- it's about keeping Americans healthier. Investing in prevention gives all Americans the opportunity to lead healthier lives and ensures our workforce is strong and healthy enough to compete with the rest of the world. The Public Health Investment Fund and National Prevention and Wellness Strategy would lower disease rates, improve quality of life, and help reduce health care costs for millions of Americans.
- For too long, health care has focused on treating people after they've become sick, instead of keeping them well in the first place.
- We'll never reduce health care costs until we improve the health of Americans. Right now, 75 percent of all health care costs are spent on the treatment of chronic diseases, many of which could have been prevented.
- The National Prevention and Wellness Strategy included in the House & Senate bills would allow us to set clear, achievable goals for improving the health of Americans.
- We know that strategic investments in evidence-based disease prevention programs in communities can result in a big payoff in a short time -- reducing health care costs, increasing the productivity of the nation's workforce, and helping people lead healthier lives.
- The Public Health Investment Fund included in the House and Senate bills would strategically support disease prevention, public health, the health workforce, and research that would directly improve the health of Americans while reducing health care costs.
- Investing in prevention gives all Americans the opportunity to lead healthier lives and ensures our workforce is strong and healthy enough to compete with the rest of the world. The Public Health Investment Fund and National Prevention and Wellness Strategy would lower disease rates, improve quality of life, and help reduce health care costs for millions of Americans.

Talking Points in Favor of House Bill's Prevention Strategy & Investment Fund

- Seventy-five percent of health care costs go toward the treatment of chronic disease, and obesity alone is estimated to cost us almost \$147 billion per year. We'll never reduce health care costs until we improve the health of Americans.
- The House bill, through its creation of a National Prevention and Wellness Strategy and the Public Health Investment Fund, would reorient our health system towards prevention of disease, where our focus and our dollars should be expended.
- **National Prevention and Wellness Strategy** - The federal government does not currently have any structure or plan that coordinates health policy across government to assess our public health status, establish national priorities, and identify health goals and objectives. The Strategy in this bill would accomplish those goals.
- **The Public Health Investment Fund** created in this bill would be a dedicated funding stream for public health and prevention that is needed to meet the many emerging health threats we must face, and the persistent chronic disease rates that we must begin to control.
 - The Fund would allow us to build upon what we know already works and to test new approaches. It would enable us to prioritize prevention and health, not just treatment.
 - The Fund would help finance the delivery of evidence-based, community-based prevention and wellness services grants. It allows flexibility for communities to determine the right mix of interventions.
 - Research has shown that effective community level prevention activities focusing on nutrition, physical activity and smoking cessation can reduce chronic disease rates and have a significant return on investment.
 - The Fund would support core public health infrastructure to help state, local and tribal health departments meet their responsibilities and would ensure accountability by requiring that states address needs including those identified through accreditation.
 - The funds are essential, as the nature and scope of responsibilities that public health officials are responsible for continues to grow. These responsibilities have expanded to entail emergency preparedness and response, an increasing role in food safety, and now even helping to prevent and adapt to the health effects of climate change.
 - The Fund authorizes and finances the U.S. Community Preventive Services Task Force and the Task Force on Clinical Preventive Services. It gives them the resources they need to do their job – that is, to provide the health community and policy makers with the information they need to make the best decisions about preventive health.
 - Through the creation of a Public Health Workforce Corps and preventive medicine and public health training grant programs, the bill would help to address the persistent workforce shortages that we're experiencing in state and local health departments.

Talking Points in Favor of Senate Bill's Prevention Strategy, Investment Fund, Transformation Grants & Healthy Aging Pilot

- Seventy-five percent of health care costs go toward the treatment of chronic disease, and obesity alone is estimated to cost us almost \$147 billion per year. Chronic diseases cost the U.S. an additional \$1 trillion each year in lost productivity. We'll never reduce health care costs until we improve the health of Americans.
- The Senate bill, through its creation of a National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy and the Prevention and Public Health Investment Fund, would reorient our health system towards prevention of disease, where our focus and our dollars should be expended.
- **National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy** - The federal government does not currently have any structure or plan that coordinates health policy across government to assess our public health status, establish national priorities, and identify health goals and objectives. The Strategy in this bill would accomplish those goals.
- **The Prevention and Public Health Investment Fund** created in this bill would be a dedicated funding stream for public health and prevention that is needed to meet the many emerging health threats we must face and persistent chronic disease rates.
 - The Fund would build upon what works, but also test new approaches to promoting prevention and wellness. It would ensure accountability by evaluating new programs that are funded and would enable us to prioritize prevention and health, instead of just treatment. But it does not earmark every dollar because the prevention needs of the nation may change over time. We need the flexibility to direct money where it will do the most good, in proven health interventions.
 - The Fund could support existing chronic disease programs – like the CDC's nutrition, physical activity and obesity program, and the school health program – which are currently only in half of states.
 - The Fund could help fight obesity and chronic disease by funding community transformation grants, which are competitive grants authorized in the bill that must focus on reducing chronic disease rates and addressing health disparities. These grants are flexible yet accountable – by requiring proven, evidence-based approaches and an evaluation.
 - Baby Boomers have higher obesity rates than previous generations. The bill authorizes a healthy aging pilot program to target preventive health to the pre-Medicare population. The Fund could support this program and help improve the health of this population before they age into Medicare.
 - We know that immunizations are cost-effective and save lives. The bill would expand access to immunizations, and the Fund could help support that crucial investment.
 - The HELP bill also authorizes the Preventive Task Forces, which provide us with the information we need to make the best decisions about preventive health.