

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 25, 2015

Dear Colleague,

The Prevention and Public Health Fund (the Fund), the federal government's single largest investment in public health, strengthens federal programs that are critical to preventing both intentional and unintentional injuries, such as suicide and falls. The purpose of our letter is to highlight these essential programs that the Fund supports, which save lives and money.

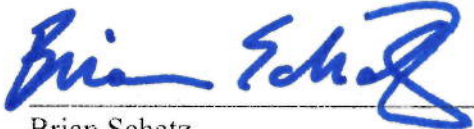
Injuries – both intentional and unintentional – remain the leading cause of death of people ages 1-44 in the United States. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for American youths between 10-24, claiming approximately 4,600 lives each year. In addition to the tremendous personal and social toll, the economic costs of injuries are astonishing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that suicide costs our nation approximately \$34.6 billion each year. To combat suicide, the Fund supports the Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Program at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Last year, the Fund provided approximately \$12 million to 321 Garrett Lee Smith grantees, in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, which aided colleges and universities in preventing suicide among students, including through enhanced services for at-risk students with mental and substance use disorders. On a state level, the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) used its \$1.4 million grant in 2014 to provide resource centers, training facilities, diversity awareness programs, and augment behavioral health services. Over the course of three years, DMHAS anticipates that 8,715 students will receive screening, brief interventions, and mental health services.

The CDC estimates that injuries cost more than \$406 billion each year in combined medical and work loss costs. In 2013, 2.5 million non-fatal falls among older adults were treated in emergency departments, and more than 734,000 of these patients were hospitalized. The Fund provided \$5 million to the Administration for Community Living for FY2014 to support entities in 10 states, 4 tribal organizations, and the National Falls Prevention Resource Center, which implement sustainable strategies for expanding access to evidence-based programs shown to prevent falls, reduce fall risk factors among older adults, and ultimately save health care dollars. On a state level, support from the Fund through the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant allowed the Hawaii Department of Health's Injury Prevention and Control Section (IPCS) to provide improved access for seniors to a CDC-recommended exercise program designed to prevent falls (with classes that have been shown to reduce falls by as much as half among participants). The IPCS increased the number of exercise instructors to better reach seniors, particularly in rural areas.

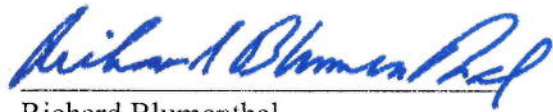
Wider implementation and increased investments in proven, evidence-based preventive health policies have been shown to result in a healthier and more productive population. Please

join with us in supporting this successful and vital effort to prevent suicide and reduce injuries nationwide and oppose harmful cuts to the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

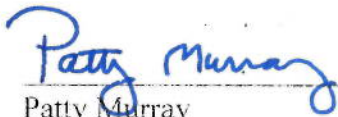
Sincerely,



Brian Schatz
UNITED STATES SENATE



Richard Blumenthal
UNITED STATES SENATE



Patty Murray
UNITED STATES SENATE



Al Franken
UNITED STATES SENATE



Benjamin L. Cardin
UNITED STATES SENATE



Barbara Boxer
UNITED STATES SENATE



Tom Udall
UNITED STATES SENATE



Richard J. Durbin
UNITED STATES SENATE

Bob Casey, Jr.

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
UNITED STATES SENATE

Chris Coons

Christopher A. Coons
UNITED STATES SENATE

Edward J. Markey

Edward J. Markey
UNITED STATES SENATE

Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown
UNITED STATES SENATE

Jack Reed

Jack Reed
U.S. SENATOR