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Washington, D.C. – The founding leaders of the *Data: Elemental to Health Campaign* – Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE), Healthcare Information & Management Systems Society (HIMSS), and National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) – issued the following statement in response to the release of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) spending bill for fiscal year 2020:

> *We applaud Chair Rosa DeLauro and members of the Labor-HHS appropriations subcommittee for recognizing the need to invest in the public health infrastructure and providing $100 million for the first year of a multi-year, transformative, new initiative that will speed data collection and health monitoring to save lives.*
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> *The funding proposed for modernization of public health data surveillance and analytics will allow governmental public health agencies at the federal, state, and local level to move from sluggish, manual, paper-based data collection—still in widespread use—to seamless, automated, interoperable, and secure data systems. This funding will also support efforts to modernize our public health workforce to use and maintain these complex data systems, interpret the data, and develop and deploy actionable interventions.*
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> *"As an epidemiologist in Florida, and now in my role representing epidemiologists nationwide, I have personally felt frustration and anguish and seen my colleagues suffer too, when we want to provide answers to community members but can't," said Janet Hamilton, Director of Science and Policy at CSTE. "The nation's antiquated public health data systems have important consequences: delayed detection and response, lost time, lost opportunities, and lost lives."*
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> *Whether fighting infectious threats like measles, salmonella, E. coli, Ebola, and multi-drug resistant Candida auris, environmental threats like lead poisoning and the opioid epidemic, or chronic diseases like diabetes and obesity, public health threats are broad, persistent, and constantly evolving here at home and overseas. Too often, the public health response to these and other threats is hindered because the data move more slowly than the disease. The $100 million proposed for data modernization in the Labor-HHS spending bill will yield more, better, faster, secure health information to make life-saving decisions based on complete, accurate and timely data.*

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The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE), Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), and National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) have joined together to spearhead the *Data: Elemental to Health* campaign—the first of its kind to secure meaningful, sustained funding to modernize the public health surveillance enterprise at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and through it, the state, local, tribal, and territorial health departments. For more information visit http://www.cste.org/data_elemental.