

Data: Elemental to Health

CSTE APHL HIMSS NAPHSIS



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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 House Appropriations Committee reporting out the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) spending bill for fiscal year 2020:

We applaud members of the House Appropriations Committee for 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.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—together with state, local, territorial, and tribal health departments—have taken important steps to improve the nation’s public health data infrastructure, but often in a piecemeal approach and without sufficient, dedicated funding. As a result, the nation’s public health data infrastructure remains antiquated and fragmented, relies on obsolete data sharing methods like faxes, emails, and phone calls, and is in dire need of security upgrades. Lack of interoperability, reporting consistency, and data standards leads to errors in quality, completeness, and timeliness.

When data move more slowly than diseases, the American people suffer. The funding proposed in the Labor-HHS bill represents the first-ever, enterprise-level commitment to build a public health data superhighway of the 21st Century to speed the transmission of accurate, complete data. This funding will also support efforts to ensure the public health workforce develops and maintains the state of the art data science skills needed to put the data to use through public health action.

We look forward to working with Congress to ensure enactment of this important initiative, and with CDC in formulating its multi-year implementation plan.

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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.