March XX, 2020

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education  
135 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education  
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies funding bill, we respectfully request you provide $20 million for the Core State Violence and Injury Prevention Program (Core SVIPP) within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) National Center for Injury Prevention and Control account. This increase will ensure that more states can work with the CDC to address leading causes of injury. We also ask that you include language encouraging the CDC to allow the use of Core SVIPP funds to address state determined needs, such as suicide prevention.

Injuries and violence are the leading cause of death during the first four decades of life, regardless of gender, race or socioeconomic status. According to the CDC, every three minutes a person dies from a preventable injury or act of violence including domestic violence, falls, motor vehicle collisions, homicides, prescription drug misuse, and suicide. Together, nearly 231,000 deaths, 32 million emergency room visits, and 3 million hospitalizations resulting in $670 billion in health care costs, lost pay and productivity are attributable to injuries and violence each year.

The Core SVIPP is the sole federal program that uses research-based evidence to identify the most effective strategies to prevent injuries caused by accidents or violence. States use this funding to build, strengthen, and maintain their injury and violence prevention programs with a focus on making the best use of data; designing, implementing and evaluating prevention programs; and affecting public behavior and knowledge on these issues.

Unfortunately, only 23 states currently receive Core SVIPP funding due to flat or decreased funding in the last decade. An appropriation of $20 million would help boost support for existing states while allowing more states to benefit from this program.

We also applaud report language in the FY 2019 appropriations bill that encouraged the CDC to allow states to use their Core SVIPP funds on their greatest injury and prevention needs, rather than just the four areas selected by the federal government. It is critical to maintain this language and allow for states to use funds to also respond to areas of need that they identify. For example, suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States, and is closely connected to other
forms of injury and violence, such as child abuse. By including language allowing greater flexibility with the use of Core SVIPP funds, states would be able to create a comprehensive approach to injury and violence prevention tailored to their state.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,