

The CPH Update

A Publication of the Campaign for Public Health

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CDC DIRECTOR AGAIN CALLS FOR \$15 BILLION AGENCY BUDGET

On February 27, **Dr. Julie Gerberding**, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, visited Capitol Hill and spoke to more than 30 congressional staff and several dozen partner organizations. The importance of public health and the work of the CDC were discussed. Joining Gerberding were directors from the CDC's Health Promotion, Chronic Disease Prevention, Injury Prevention and Healthcare Quality Promotion centers. These senior CDC scientists added valuable insights on specific CDC programs during the meeting.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Gerberding mentioned that the current health care reform debate should include a stronger role for public health and prevention. She argued the current debate focused on treatment but lacked a much-needed emphasis on keeping Americans healthy. The informative briefing was followed by an extensive question and answer period. CPH staff asked Dr. Gerberding if the president's proposed FY09 budget would meet the needs of the CDC. She responded by highlighting her 2006 and 2007 professional judgment budgets that call for a \$15 billion agency by 2011 and a core program funding line that is a billion dollars higher than the level President Bush recently proposed. Further analysis is available at www.FundCDC.org.

Dr. Gerberding's visit to Capitol Hill was hosted by co-chairs of the **Congressional Study Group on Public Health*** with additional support from **Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI)**, **Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA)** and **Congressman Jerry Lewis (R-CA)**.

THIRD STAFF TOUR OF CDC FILLED TO CAPACITY – FOURTH TOUR NEEDED

CPH recently invited health staff in both the House and Senate to join our third congressional staff tour of the CDC's Atlanta headquarters. Nearly 40 staff from member offices and congressional committees responded. As a result, CPH is now planning two trips to Atlanta. Our third tour with House staff is planned for March 24 and 25. To accommodate the remaining staff, a joint House and Senate tour is being discussed for the Memorial Day recess.

More than 20 congressional staff members from the House of Representatives are currently planning to attend our March tour. Once at the CDC, top public health scientists will brief participants during a full day of meetings. The diverse efforts the agency undertakes to protect our nation's health will be covered. Past iterations of this tour received extremely positive responses from all participants and have proven vital to increasing congressional support of the CDC's work. Our 2006 tour with 18 House staff was the largest congressional delegation ever to visit the CDC. That tour ultimately led to the creation of the **Congressional Study Group on Public Health**.

Members of the CPH Advisory Council are invited to send CPH a one page fact sheet detailing your organization's interest in the CDC. These will be given to staff on the tour. For additional information on the trip, please contact Kristen Latona at KristenL@FundCDC.org.

MORE BRIEFINGS IN 2008

The **Congressional Study Group on Public Health** finished its first year as an official congressional member organization by presenting two additional Hill briefings in September and December 2007. Topics covered were neglected tropical diseases and violence and injury control. In all, the Study Group presented eight public health briefings last year. At these events, senior leaders from the CDC, local and state health agency representatives, and individuals from the private and non-profit sectors served as panelists.

The Study Group has already presented three briefings in 2008. The first covered health in early childhood, and the second was a staff briefing with Dr. Gerberding (see top story above). The Coalition for Health Funding, CPH and several other groups sponsored a third "Public Health 101" briefing on the Hill in late February. Study Group co-chairs served as Honorary Sponsors of that event as well.

A Study Group briefing on public health trends for teens and young adults is slated for March. Adults and seniors will be covered in April. The Study Group plans to address health disparities, healthy communities, the spread of global diseases and several other topics during 2008.

BUSH BUDGET CUTS DEEP – APPROPRIATIONS PROSPECTS UNCERTAIN

Last year's presidential veto of the nation's major health funding bill is still fresh in the minds of some legislators and advocates in Washington. Many "inside the Beltway" wonder how budget negotiations with President Bush will proceed this year – particularly after the President proposed massive cuts to many favored discretionary programs. CDC's own core programs, for example, receive a massive cut of more than 7.5% in the president's FY09 budget request to Congress. Some suggest Congress may extend the budget process a few extra months until a new administration is sworn into office. In any event, House and Senate Budget Committees are on schedule – setting congressional priorities among all the various federal agencies. Stay tuned!

* *Congressional Study Group on Public Health Co-Chairs: Representatives **James P. McGovern (D-MA)**, **Kay Granger (R-TX)** and **Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA)***

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2007 AUDIT & ANNUAL REPORT NEAR COMPLETION

Once again this year, the Campaign for Public Health sought the professional services of an accounting firm to perform an audit of its 2007 accounts. This audit is nearing completion. CPH is expecting a good report that will confirm 2007 was our most successful year to date. A related FY07 Annual Report is under production and will be posted on our Web site upon the completion of the 2007 audit.

CPH LEADERSHIP SETS TONE FOR 2008

At a meeting in late January, the CPH Board of Directors set out an aggressive plan for 2008 that strives to expand the reach of the Campaign. This goal-oriented plan focuses CPH efforts on implementing more staff tours of the CDC, undertaking additional briefings and Hill meetings, expanding the Campaign's Advisory Council and leadership, growing the organization's capacity, and ensuring the CPH has the resources to support these efforts.

STAFF MEMBER TO WORK IN AFRICA – NEW INTERN JOINS CPH

Kristen Latona, health policy associate at the Campaign for Public Health, will take a three-month sabbatical from CPH to spend the summer in Uganda. Ms. Latona will complete her graduate school practicum by working with The AIDS Support Organization out of Mbale. TASO is the largest indigenous non-governmental organization providing HIV/AIDS services on the continent. Ms. Latona will undertake a variety of public health activities in the region and is making plans to cross paths with CDC staff in the field during her stay.

Hayley Severance, a master's in public health student at The George Washington University, recently accepted an intern position with CPH for the spring semester. Her main task is to help meet the organization's rapidly growing needs. In addition to policy research and analysis, she is upgrading the CPH database, supporting the completion of several major events and meetings, updating our Web site, and is assisting with correspondence.

CONGRESS, MEDIA AND PARTNERS USE CPH ANALYSIS

Our work to track the CDC's complex budget in easy-to-interpret materials continues to be welcomed by members of congressional committees, our partner organizations, media outlets and health staff on Capitol Hill. CPH's most recent graph depicts the rise and fall of the CDC's core budget lines over the past several years. Members of the House Budget committee, several partner groups and staff on Capitol Hill have used the graph to support arguments to better fund the CDC. *Science Magazine* recently inquired about the Campaign's work and our analysis of the CDC's budget. Some partners have posted the publication on their organization's Web site and distributed the document in meetings with members of Congress.

CPH WEB SITE CONTINUES TO BREAK PAST RECORDS

CPH is pleased to note that hits to our Web site from "unique visitors" continue to climb. Since the site was launched in 2005, monthly visits to our site have increased 15 fold and continue trending upward. In keeping with our effort to provide the public health community with valuable information and resources, CPH is considering adding additional content to the www.FundCDC.org site. One item under consideration is to provide webcasts of relevant Hill briefings. Hill staff who missed briefings could watch the discussion at their leisure.

CHAIRMAN PUBLISHES OP-ED

The Chairman of the CPH Board, Evan Jones, published an op-ed piece titled "**Disease Control is Not Partisan**" in December's Seattle Post-Intelligencer. The piece discussed the negative impact successive years of budget cuts are having on public health efforts. In his article, Mr. Jones called for legislators to work together to protect our nation's health and urged them to invest substantial resources in the CDC. "Gutting our nation's disease prevention infrastructure in the name of fiscal discipline is like canceling your health insurance coverage to save the co-payment. With too many of our tax dollars going to treating the sick, it doesn't make good business sense to cut back on science-based efforts that keep Americans healthy" wrote Jones. The full text of this article can be found under "Media" on our Web site.

STAY INFORMED – email info@FundCDC.org to join our mailing list or to learn what you can do to help.

CAMPAIGN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

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The Campaign for Public Health is an independent, not-for-profit, 501(c)(4) organization comprised of prominent leaders in the public health community dedicated to advocating for legislation that will accelerate the growth of federal appropriations for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Learn more at:
www.FundCDC.org