

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 576

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 4 (legislative day, MARCH 31), 2022

Mr. LUJÁN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. SMITH, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health
Week.

Whereas the week of April 4, 2022, is designated as National Public Health Week by the American Public Health Association;

Whereas the theme for National Public Health Week in 2022 is “Public Health is Where You Are”;

Whereas the goal of National Public Health Week in 2022 is to recognize the contributions of public health in—

- (1) improving the health of the people of the United States; and
- (2) achieving health equity;

Whereas, as of the date of introduction of this resolution, the United States and the global community are responding

to the COVID–19 pandemic, which requires support for—

(1) a robust public health infrastructure and workforce;

(2) State, territorial, local, and Tribal health departments, health care workers, public health laboratories, and first responders;

(3) diagnostic testing of new and potential COVID–19 cases and activities related to epidemiology and public health data;

(4) complying with appropriate social distancing and quarantine recommendations;

(5) relieving financial burdens for individuals in the United States hurt by the COVID–19 pandemic, including through public health emergency leave;

(6) the Medicaid programs and community health centers of States to ensure care for vulnerable populations;

(7) collaboration among the Federal Government, State and local governments, schools, businesses, and employers to support public health measures to decrease community spread of COVID–19;

(8) investments in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that support infectious disease outbreak preparedness and critical public health infrastructure for State and local health departments and public health laboratories;

(9) a comprehensive effort to ensure a successful COVID–19 vaccination campaign that boosts access to vaccines for vulnerable populations and trust in vaccine safety and effectiveness; and

(10) efforts to address racism as a public health crisis and reduce racial and ethnic health disparities related

to COVID–19 deaths, vaccine access and testing, and important health outcomes outside of the pandemic such as maternal mortality;

Whereas, in 2020, the life expectancy at birth for the population of the United States declined by 1.5 years, which is the largest drop in life expectancy since 1943;

Whereas many of the leading causes of death for individuals in the United States result from chronic conditions, which are among the most common, costly, and preventable of all health challenges;

Whereas there are significant differences in the health status of individuals living in the healthiest States and those living in the least healthy States, including differences in obesity rates, the prevalence of chronic disease, and the prevalence of infectious disease;

Whereas racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States continue to experience disparities in the burden of illness and death, as compared to the entire population of the United States;

Whereas violence is a leading cause of premature death, and it is estimated that more than 7 individuals per hour die a violent death in the United States;

Whereas deaths from homicides cost the economy of the United States billions of dollars, and the violence of homicides can cause social and emotional distress, community trauma, injury, disability, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder;

Whereas more than 47,500 lives were lost due to suicide in 2019, and in May 2020, during the COVID–19 pandemic, emergency department visits for suspected suicide

attempts began to increase among adolescents aged 12 to 17 years, especially among girls;

Whereas an estimated 1 in 7 children in the United States experience child abuse and neglect, and 1,840 children died of abuse and neglect in 2019;

Whereas, despite significant progress in reducing the infant mortality rate in the United States to a historic low of 5.6 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019, the infant mortality rate in the United States still greatly varies among States;

Whereas women die from pregnancy-related complications in the United States at a higher rate than in many other developed countries, and an estimated 60 percent of maternal deaths in the United States are preventable;

Whereas Black mothers experience a maternal mortality rate 3 to 4 times higher than White mothers;

Whereas there were an estimated 100,306 drug overdose deaths in the United States during the 12-month period ending in April 2021, the highest level ever recorded during a 12-month period and an increase of 28.5 percent from the 78,056 deaths during the same period the prior year;

Whereas cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, accounting for more than 480,000 deaths each year, including more than 41,000 deaths resulting from secondhand smoke;

Whereas the percentage of adults in the United States who smoke cigarettes has decreased from 20.9 percent in 2005 to 13.7 percent in 2018;

Whereas, in 2020, according to data from the National Youth Tobacco Survey, 19.6 percent of high school students

(3,020,000 students) and 4.7 percent of middle school students (550,000 students) reported current e-cigarette use;

Whereas data from the National Youth Tobacco Survey showed that in 2020 approximately 40 percent of high school e-cigarette users were using an e-cigarette on 20 or more days of the month, and approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of high school e-cigarette users were using e-cigarettes every day, indicating a strong dependence on nicotine among youth;

Whereas, in the past 2 decades, heat-related mortality for older individuals has almost doubled, reaching a record high of approximately 19,000 deaths in 2018;

Whereas, from 2018 to 2019, the United States spent approximately \$13 per person on climate change adaptation in the health sector, far less than what is needed to prevent the growing health impacts of climate change;

Whereas, in 2016, fine particulate air pollution led to more than 64,000 premature deaths in the United States, and Black and Hispanic individuals in the United States were disproportionately impacted;

Whereas voting helps shape the conditions in which people can be healthy, and good health is consistently positively associated with higher likelihood of voter participation;

Whereas public health organizations use National Public Health Week to educate public policymakers and public health professionals on issues that are important to improving the health of the people of the United States;

Whereas studies show that small strategic investments in disease prevention can result in significant savings in health care costs;

Whereas vaccination is one of the most significant public health achievements in history and has resulted in substantial decreases in—

- (1) the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths associated with vaccine-preventable diseases; and
- (2) health care costs associated with vaccine-preventable diseases;

Whereas each 10-percent increase in local public health spending contributes to—

- (1) a 6.9-percent decrease in infant deaths;
- (2) a 3.2-percent decrease in deaths related to cardiovascular disease;
- (3) a 1.4-percent decrease in deaths due to diabetes; and
- (4) a 1.1-percent decrease in cancer-related deaths;

Whereas public health professionals help communities prevent, prepare for, mitigate, and recover from the impact of a full range of health threats, including—

- (1) disease outbreaks, such as the COVID–19 pandemic;
- (2) natural disasters, such as wildfires, flooding, and severe storms; and
- (3) other disasters, including disasters caused by human activity and public health emergencies;

Whereas public health professionals collaborate with partners outside of the health sector, including city planners, transportation officials, education officials, and private sector businesses, recognizing that other sectors can influence health outcomes;

Whereas, in communities across the United States, individuals are changing the way they care for their health by avoiding tobacco use, eating healthier, increasing physical

activity, and preventing unintentional injuries at home and in the workplace; and

Whereas efforts to adequately support public health and the prevention of disease and injury can continue to transform a health system focused on treating illness into a health system focused on preventing disease and injury and promoting wellness: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the goals and ideals of National
3 Public Health Week;

4 (2) recognizes the efforts of public health pro-
5 fessionals, the Federal Government, States, Tribes,
6 municipalities, local communities, and individuals in
7 preventing disease and injury;

8 (3) recognizes the role of public health in—

9 (A) preventing and responding to infec-
10 tious disease outbreaks, such as the COVID–19
11 pandemic;

12 (B) mitigating short-term and long-term
13 impacts of infectious disease outbreaks on the
14 health and wellness of individuals in the United
15 States;

16 (C) addressing social and other deter-
17 minants of health, including health disparities
18 experienced by minority populations; and

19 (D) improving the overall health of individ-
20 uals and communities in the United States;

1 (4) encourages increased efforts and re-
2 sources—

3 (A) to improve the health of individuals in
4 the United States; and

5 (B) to make the United States, in 1 gen-
6 eration, the healthiest country in the world
7 by—

8 (i) providing greater opportunities to
9 improve community health and prevent dis-
10 ease and injury; and

11 (ii) strengthening the public health
12 system and workforce in the United States;
13 and

14 (5) encourages the people of the United States
15 to learn about the role of the public health system
16 in improving health across the United States.

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