Dear

I am writing to urge you to actively oppose efforts to eliminate Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) funding for the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH) grant program. The Boston Public Health Commission is one of 39 current grantees under the PICH program. Both the House and Senate FY16 Labor-HHS bills have eliminated the third year of funding for this essential program. I thank you for your support in funding the first two years of the program, and urge you to do so again so we can continue to improve the health of Bostonians and our fellow Americans who are also benefiting from PICH.

As a resident of the BLANK neighborhood of BLANK, every day I see the devastating effects of chronic diseases on my family and neighbors. The PICH grant enables a multi-sector approach aimed at changing policies, systems, and environments of some of the biggest, but preventable, factors causing chronic diseases such as tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity among others. Fully, 75 percent of Boston residents will benefit from these initiatives, which in Boston we are calling, “*Let’s Get Healthy, Boston!* Some of the evidence informed initiatives that PICH is supporting include, among others:

* Increasing the number of smoke-free units in multi-family housing developments *(second hand smoke is a known carcinogen and travels easily through floors, walls, and heating and cooling systems).*
* Increasing the use of Boston Bounty Bucks that doubles the purchasing power of SNAP recipients at farmers markets (*access to healthy fresh food is limited and expensive in many low income neighborhoods).*
* Promotion of healthy, non-sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) in pharmacies in Boston *(local pharmacy retail stores serve as the local corner store in many neighborhoods and SSBs are the leading cause of obesity in children).*
* Increasing the distribution of the HubWay bike sharing program subsidies for low-income people as well as providing mobile bike repair services with the hope of eventually expanding the system to outlying neighborhoods *(inactivity and a sedentary lifestyle are leading contributors to chronic disease).*

Failure by Congress to include funding for PICH in the FY16 appropriations measures would be shortsighted. We know these investments will pay dividends in the long run through healthier communities and reduced health costs in Boston and in the 38 other communities around the nation who have begun similar activities through this grant.

Thank you for your attention to this funding issue that will have a direct impact on the health of millions of Americans. I look forward to your continued leadership in promoting the health of our community through support for the PICH program and its local name: *Let’s Get Healthy, Boston!*

Sincerely,

Name

Address

Phone number