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President & Founder

February 23, 2017

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The Honorable Paul Ryan
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United States House of
Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of
Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the Prevent Cancer Foundation, I am writing to you to urge you to consider the need for preventive health coverage and an expansion of preventive health services during consideration of changes to the Affordable Care Act.

The Prevent Cancer Foundation is the nation's only nonprofit dedicated solely to saving lives through cancer prevention and early detection. We focus on expanding research into cancer prevention and early detection, health education, and ensuring that all have access to screenings and preventive health services. As such, we want to ensure that any health reform addresses these key points:

- 1) Protect insurance coverage for those who have received care under the Affordable Care Act.** Currently, 20 million Americans receive coverage under the Affordable Care Act who need to be protected if there are substantial changes to the Act. Insurance coverage is a key determinant of preventive health because the uninsured are far less likely to have a primary care doctorⁱ or engage in regular preventive health careⁱⁱ. We realize that Congress is also concerned with an orderly transition for all Americans that does not limit their access to care.
- 2) Protect the Prevention and Public Health Fund.** This program, initiated by the Affordable Care Act, provides grants to community health organizations engaged in tobacco cessation programs, health education, and cancer screening programs in underserved communities. This vital Fund not only increases access to preventive care, but also, because of its educational and outreach component, increases use of preventive care. Supporting this Fund not only helps individuals by saving lives

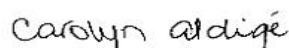
through prevention, it also makes good fiscal sense. Currently, preventable diseases such as diabetes, heart conditions and some cancers cost the economy \$1.3 trillion in both health care costs and lost productivityⁱⁱⁱ.

- 3) **Coverage for Preventive Services.** Currently, all insurers are required to cover preventive services, including vaccinations, mammography, colorectal cancer screening, and pap smears, with no copayments. The primary reason individuals cite for not getting their recommended screenings is cost, even if the individual does have insurance coverage. By requiring that these services are fully covered by insurance, we believe we can increase screening rates. We were heartened to see that the Cassidy-Collins Patient Freedom Act did maintain the requirement that insurers cover preventive services and hope that any other replacement bill would do so as well.

- 4) **Coverage for Pre-existing Conditions.** Guaranteed coverage for pre-existing conditions is one of the most important reforms of the Affordable Care Act. Someone who is responsible about their cancer screenings and has a cancer detected early and treated should not be penalized for taking care of their health by having limited options for insurance in the future. We hope that any future bill guarantees coverage for pre-existing conditions, with no requirements for continuous coverage.

We know that prevention saves lives and that the number one reason given for not receiving regular preventive care is cost. For this reason, those without insurance that covers preventive care have regularly had screening rates far below that of the insured population. Maintaining coverage for those who currently have insurance and working to expand access to prevention, screening and early detection for all is essential. We look forward to joining all of you to improve the Affordable Care Act and its protections.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Aldigé
President and Founder

ⁱ 29, 2. S. (n.d.). Key Facts about the Uninsured Population. Retrieved February 05, 2017, from <http://kff.org/uninsured/fact-sheet/key-facts-about-the-uninsured-population/#footnote-198942-17>

ⁱⁱ Mcmorrow, S., Kenney, G. M., & Goins, D. (2014). Determinants of Receipt of Recommended Preventive Services: Implications for the Affordable Care Act. *American Journal of Public Health, 104*(12), 2392-2399. doi:10.2105/ajph.2013.301569

ⁱⁱⁱ DeVol, R., & Bedroussian, A. (2007). *An Unhealthy America: The Economic Burden of Chronic Disease -- Charting a New Course to Save Lives and Increase Productivity and Economic Growth* (p. 1, Rep.). Santa Monica, CA: Milken Institute. doi:http://assets1b.milkeninstitute.org/assets/Publication/ResearchReport/PDF/chronic_disease_report.pdf