

COALITION FOR HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

August 13, 2010

Dear Senator:

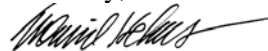
As the Senate considers the Small Business Jobs and Credit Act (H.R. 5297), the Coalition for Health Services Research urges you to **oppose the use of the Prevention and Public Health Fund from the Affordable Care Act (ACA) as an offset for an amendment offered by Senator Johanns (No. 4531)**. The Fund should never be used as an offset. Doing so would undermine programs designed to reduce the burden of disease, improve the quality of life, and bend the health care cost curve.

According to the National Federation of Independent Business, the cost of health care is the number one concern of small business owners. The indirect costs to employers of their employees' poor health—lower productivity, higher rates of disability, higher rates of injury, and more workers' compensation claims—can be 2-3 times the costs of direct medical expenses. Small businesses disproportionately feel the impact of the unhealthy workforce. Small, strategic investments in community-level prevention and public health services—such as those supported by the Fund—have been shown to significantly reduce these health care costs. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce agrees, noting that investing in the health of Americans will improve the bottom line for businesses by lowering health care costs, reducing absenteeism, and improving productivity.

The Fund was established in ACA to support transformative, evidence-based public health and prevention programs that will produce a significant return on investment. In FY 2010 a portion of the Fund will be used to bolster public health research and data, which will enhance our understanding of people's health and our effectiveness in improving it. One promising area for future investment is Public Health Services and Systems Research (PHSSR), which identifies "what works" in public health and ensures that public health operations and interventions are evidence-based. Improving the performance and impact of the public health system will show dividends, helping to both slow the growth of health care costs, increase business' productivity and profitability, and improve the health of our nation.

We must ensure that we allow this unprecedented opportunity to expand the science of public health delivery, transform our public health system, and improve the health of those in America. **We urge you to vote NO on the Prevention Fund offset within the Johanns amendment**, and to thwart future efforts to raid the Fund at the expense of people's health and well-being.

Sincerely,



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