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Congress of the United States
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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE
WORKFORCE

March 16, 2011

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201-0004

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

I write to urge flexibility in the establishment of a population minimum for potential applicants for Community Transformation Grants (CTG) within the Prevention and Public Health Fund established by the Affordable Care Act. Setting a population minimum too high would severely limit the pool of potential applicants making cities like Cleveland and counties like Cuyahoga ineligible. If the State of Ohio is the only entity in Ohio eligible to apply for this grant opportunity, major regional areas in Ohio could be left out.

Furthermore, if major local and county health departments are left out and the State of Ohio is funded, local flexibility in tailoring efforts to the most urgent needs of specific communities could be vastly limited. The Cuyahoga County Board of Health and the City of Cleveland Department of Health have been actively and successfully working on a wide range of public health prevention projects, including the CDC's Healthy Communities Program.

Major local and county health departments should at least be afforded the opportunity to apply to for Community Transformation Grants to add to their existing, program-related positive community health outcomes.

I ask for your flexibility in determining eligibility standards for Community Transformation Grants (CTG). Thank you for your commitment to community-based public health.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress