

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 182

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 10, 2025

Mr. LUJÁN 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 7, 2025, is National Public Health
Week;

Whereas, in 2025, the theme for National Public Health
Week is “It Starts Here” and highlights the importance
of making a difference in our homes and communities;

Whereas, in 2025, the goal of National Public Health Week
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, from 2019 to 2021, the life expectancy at birth for
the population of the United States declined by 2.7 years,

which is the biggest 2-year decline in life expectancy since 1921 to 1923;

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 rates of illness and death, as compared with the entire population of the United States;

Whereas violence is a leading cause of premature death, and it is estimated that more than 8 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 49,476 people died by suicide in 2022, with firearms being used in over 54 percent of suicides;

Whereas significant progress has been made 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 2022, but there are still stark disparities in infant mortality by race, ethnicity, geography, and income, such as the fact

that Black infants experience infant mortality at a rate twice that of White infants;

Whereas women die from pregnancy-related complications in the United States at a higher rate than in many other developed countries, with the rate of maternal mortality being 22.3 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2022;

Whereas an estimated 80 percent of maternal deaths in the United States are preventable;

Whereas, in 2022, American Indian or Alaskan Native mothers experienced maternal mortality at a rate twice that of White mothers, and Black mothers experienced maternal mortality at a rate 2.5 times that of White mothers;

Whereas, in 2022, there were an estimated 107,941 drug overdose deaths, an increase of 17 percent from 2020 and an increase of over double from 2015;

Whereas cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, accounting for more than 480,000 deaths every year;

Whereas the percentage of adults in the United States who smoke cigarettes has decreased from 20.9 percent of the population in 2005 to 11.6 percent of the population in 2022;

Whereas e-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth since 2014, with 7.8 percent of high school students reporting e-cigarette use in 2024;

Whereas, in 2020, there were approximately 32,000 deaths in the United States due to exposure to particulate matter, 37 percent of which were directly related to fossil fuel burning;

Whereas, compared to 2000 to 2004, the number of heat-related deaths was approximately 74 percent more in 2017 to 2021;

Whereas voting helps shape the conditions in which people can be healthy;

Whereas good health is consistently positively associated with a higher likelihood of voter participation, but only 64 percent of eligible adults reported voting in the November 2024 election;

Whereas this year is the 30th anniversary of celebrating National Public Health Week, and in the past 30 years, significant strides have been made in public health, including—

(1) significantly decreasing the number of deaths due to HIV and AIDS, which peaked in 1994 at 49,095 AIDS-related deaths in the United States, with antiretroviral therapy now ensuring most people with HIV can live normal lifespans and prevention tools like PrEP significantly reducing transmission;

(2) decreasing smoking rates, which were as high as 25.5 percent among United States adults in 1994 and have now fallen to 11.4 percent due to comprehensive smoke-free policies, public awareness campaigns, and taxation policies;

(3) decreasing childhood mortality, which was at a rate of 13.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1994 and has now fallen to 5.4 deaths per 1,000 live births due to better health care access, vaccines, and nutrition;

(4) increasing health insurance coverage, with 15 percent of people in the United States uninsured in 1994, which has now improved due to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148) expand-

ing Medicaid and private insurance coverage, covering more than 35,000,000 additional people, and lowering the uninsured rate to 8.6 percent;

(5) increasing mental health awareness and treatment, with 40 percent of people with mental health conditions being untreated in 1994, which has improved due to increased awareness, parity laws, and integration into primary care, resulting in expanded access to mental health services and reduced treatment gaps;

(6) decreasing lead poisoning, with 4.4 percent of United States children having elevated blood lead levels in 1994, which has now fallen to less than 0.5 percent due to policies banning leaded gasoline and reducing lead in paint, pipes, and water systems;

(7) decreasing antibiotic misuse, which was rampant in 1994, fueled antibiotic resistance with no programs to combat it, and is now being addressed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Antibiotic Resistance Solutions Initiative that champions antibiotic stewardship;

(8) decreasing the health impacts of climate change, as evidenced by the rising heat-related deaths that were underrecognized in 1994 that are now being mitigated by actions such as public health campaigns and cooling centers, as well as frameworks like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change’s 21st Conference of Parties in Paris, France, adopted December 12, 2015 (commonly referred to as the “Paris Agreement”); and

(9) increasing pandemic preparedness, which was in its infancy in 1994 and has now grown, especially after the COVID–19 pandemic, spurring significant advancements in mRNA technology, global vaccine deployment,

and increased investments in stockpiles and global surveillance;

Whereas proposed cuts to Medicaid will harm people seeking health care services and inhibit public health;

Whereas the restructuring of the Department of Health and Human Services will be a step backwards in the provision of public health, including—

- (1) reducing the Department of Health and Human Services workforce from 82,000 to 62,000 employees; and
- (2) combining the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health into 1 new agency named the Administration for a Healthy America;

Whereas the National Institutes of Health has faced staff and funding cuts, impeding—

- (1) progress towards advancing basic science and improving understanding human biology and disease;
- (2) the development of therapeutics and devices to treat human disease and pathogenic infections;
- (3) workforce development and the bolstering of scientific education and training; and
- (4) global competitiveness in scientific research and development;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has faced staff cuts and paused critical programs, limiting the ability of the United States to—

- (1) respond to the ongoing measles outbreaks in at least 4 States, including Texas, New Mexico, Ohio, and Kansas;

(2) respond to future infectious disease outbreaks, which requires robust response from public health experts, scientists, and providers;

(3) protect the most vulnerable communities of the United States, such as children, the elderly, and the immunocompromised, from dangerous, life-threatening infections; and

(4) strengthen our national security against potential attacks using bioweapons;

Whereas the elimination of the United States Agency for International Development endangers the public health of all people of the United States;

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 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;

(3) other disasters, such as disasters caused by human activity; and

(4) 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—

1 (A) preventing and responding to infec-
 2 tious disease outbreaks, such as the COVID-19
 3 pandemic and the ongoing measles outbreak;

4 (B) mitigating the short-term and long-
 5 term impacts of infectious disease outbreaks on
 6 the health and wellness of individuals in the
 7 United States;

8 (C) addressing social and other deter-
 9 minants of health, including health disparities
 10 experienced by minority populations; and

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

13 (4) encourages increased efforts and resources
 14 to—

15 (A) improve the health of individuals in the
 16 United States; and

17 (B) make the United States, in 1 genera-
 18 tion, the healthiest Nation in the world by—

19 (i) providing greater opportunities to
 20 improve community health and prevent dis-
 21 ease and injury; and

22 (ii) strengthening the public health
 23 system and workforce in the United States;
 24 and

- 1 (5) encourages the people of the United States
- 2 to learn about the role of the public health system
- 3 in improving health across the United States.

