

May 6, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chair, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
835 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Harkin and Alexander:

The Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) respectfully requests minor technical amendments to the statutory language regarding two programs administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA): the Public Health Traineeships Program and the Public Health Training Center Program.

Specifically, we request that the statute authorizing the Public Health Traineeship Program (42 U.S.C. 295b(a)) be amended to: 1) clarify that “The Secretary may make grants to accredited schools and programs of public health...” and, 2) clarify that such accreditation refers to “Council on Education for Public Health accreditation...”

Similarly, we request that the statute authorizing the Public Health Training Center Program (42 U.S.C. 295a) be amended to: 1) clarify in §295a(b)(1) that “A public health training center shall be an accredited school or program of public health...” and, 2) clarify in §295a(b)(1) that such accreditation refers to “Council on Education for Public Health accreditation. In addition, we request that the funding preference language in §295a(2) be similarly revised to state “...Council on Education for Public Health accredited schools and programs of public health.” Due to the existing statutory provision, CEPH-accredited programs are currently ineligible for the funding preference.

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) is the independent agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit schools of public health and public health programs outside schools of public health, and which has been in existence since 1974. In the decades since the statutory language was enacted, CEPH has accredited many more programs in public health. These programs play the same educational role as schools of public health, with schools generally offering a comprehensive curriculum while programs, being a subset of another college within the university, often specialize in a specific discipline. Both schools and programs must meet the same set of rigorous accreditation standards, as set by the Department of Education’s recognized accrediting body, the Council on Education for Public Health.

ASPPH represents both CEPH-accredited schools and programs. Both the schools and programs in our membership support these changes. As such, we do not believe there is any opposition to these minor statutory modifications.

We appreciate your support of these important training programs over the years and welcome the opportunity to address any questions you might have on these proposed statutory modifications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harrison C. Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Harrison C. Spencer, MD, MPH, CPH
President and CEO

May 6, 2014

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Pitts
Chair, House Health Subcommittee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member, House Health Subcommittee
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Upton, Waxman, Pitts, and Pallone:

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Harrison C. Spencer, MD, MPH, CPH
President and CEO