

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 632

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 10, 2024

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 1, 2024, is National Public Health
Week;

Whereas the theme for National Public Health Week in 2024
is “Protecting, Connecting and Thriving: We Are All
Public Health”;

Whereas the goal of National Public Health Week in 2024
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, as of the date of introduction of this resolution, the
United States and the global community are continuing

to recover from the COVID–19 pandemic, which requires support for—

(1) a robust public health infrastructure and workforce;

(2) State, territorial, local, and Tribal health departments, health care workers, public health laboratories, and first responders;

(3) activities related to epidemiology and public health data;

(4) relieving financial burdens for individuals in the United States hurt by the COVID–19 pandemic, including through public health emergency leave;

(5) State Medicaid programs and community health centers to ensure care for vulnerable populations;

(6) collaboration among the Federal Government, State and local governments, Tribal health organizations, schools, businesses, and employers to support public health measures;

(7) investments in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which support infectious disease outbreak preparedness and critical public health infrastructure for State and local health departments and public health laboratories;

(8) a comprehensive effort to ensure successful vaccination campaigns that boost access to vaccines for vulnerable populations and trust in vaccine safety and effectiveness; and

(9) efforts to address racism as a public health crisis and reduce racial and ethnic health disparities related to COVID–19 deaths, vaccine access and testing, and important health outcomes outside of the pandemic such as maternal mortality;

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 diseases, and the prevalence of infectious diseases;

Whereas racial and ethnic minority populations in the United States continue to experience disparities in the burdens of illness and death, as compared to the entire population of the United States;

Whereas violence is a leading cause of premature death, and it is estimated that more than 7 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 49,449 people died by suicide in 2022, with firearms being used in over 50 percent of suicides;

Whereas an estimated 1 in 7 children in the United States experienced child abuse and neglect in the past year, with 1,750 children dying of abuse and neglect in 2020;

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;

Whereas there are still stark disparities in infant mortality by race, ethnicity, geography, and income, as evidenced by

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 32.9 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2021;

Whereas an estimated 84 percent of maternal deaths in the United States are preventable;

Whereas, from 2017 to 2019, 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 almost 3 times that of White mothers;

Whereas there were an estimated 107,622 drug overdose deaths in 2021, an increase of nearly 15 percent from 2020;

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 11.5 percent of the population in 2021;

Whereas e-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth since 2014, with 10.0 percent of high school students reporting e-cigarette use in 2023;

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 heat-related mortality for people over 65 is estimated to have increased by approximately 74 percent from 2000 through 2004 compared to 2017 through 2021;

Whereas voting helps shape the conditions in which people can be healthy, and good health is consistently associated positively with higher likelihood of voter participation, but only 52.2 percent of eligible adults reported voting in the November 2022 elections;

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 the vaccination of the public 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 each 10-percent increase in local public health spending contributes to a—

- (1) 6.9-percent decrease in infant deaths;
 - (2) 3.2-percent decrease in deaths related to cardiovascular disease;
 - (3) 1.4-percent decrease in deaths due to diabetes;
- and
- (4) 1.1-percent decrease in cancer-related deaths;

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; and
- (3) other disasters, including disasters caused by human activity and 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,

1 municipalities, local communities, and individuals in
2 preventing disease and injury;

3 (3) recognizes the role of public health in—

4 (A) preventing and responding to infec-
5 tious disease outbreaks, such as the COVID–19
6 pandemic;

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

11 (C) addressing social and other deter-
12 minants of health, including health disparities
13 experienced by minority populations; and

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

16 (4) encourages increased efforts and resources
17 to—

18 (A) improve the health of individuals in the
19 United States; and

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

22 (i) providing greater opportunities to
23 improve community health and prevent dis-
24 ease and injury; and

1 (ii) strengthening the public health
2 system and workforce in the United States;
3 and
4 (5) encourages the people of the United States
5 to learn about the role of the public health system
6 in improving health across the United States.

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