

# ***Iowa Public Health Association***



Statement Provided to Iowa House of Representative Appropriations  
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Presented by: Jeneane Moody, MPH, Executive Director

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on behalf of the Iowa Public Health Association, the non-profit organization committed to building a shared value for public health and the voice for public health in Iowa.

IPHA has grave concerns about the Health and Human Services budget proposed for FY18. This proposal is a 13% reduction to Iowa's investment in its health and is in excess of Governor Branstad's recommendation which was balanced and allowed the Iowa Department of Public Health the flexibility to address Iowa's health priorities.

The need for such a deep cut to Iowans' health unclear and it will bear fruit in diminished health of our communities. For example, the \$1 million cut to tobacco control will result in a half percent increase in youth smoking rate, 540 more Iowa kids growing up to become addicted smokers, 180 more Iowa kids dying prematurely from smoking and an \$11.3 million increase in future health care expenditures.

Public health excels at assessment and surveillance. In 2016 Iowa's local public health agencies, your constituents, conducted Community Health Needs Assessments in your districts identifying each county's top health issues. The Iowa Department of Public Health then conducted a robust analysis of 1,000+ indicators, progress on the current *Healthy Iowans* plan, information from the 2015 State Health Profile and areas of need and population trends to identify Iowa's top health issues (e.g., obesity, nutrition, physical activity, tobacco). Public health needs the investment and the flexibility to prioritize this investment to address these top health issues. We must give Iowans the biggest bang for their buck.

We all know the idiom "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" as well as "Penny wise, Pound foolish." There is truth in both statements, and we need to apply that wisdom here. Public health is focused on preventing disease to reduce costly treatment later. This budget *does not invest in the identified health priorities*. These reductions are short-sighted in that cuts to prevention will run counter to the return on investment.

Your constituents have done the hard work to collect and analyze the data to establish Iowa's state and local health priorities. IPHA urges the committee to pass a reasonable budget that addresses the collective health priorities of all 3.1 million Iowans.