



April 9, 2014

The Honorable Bernie Sanders  
United State Senate  
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write in support of the Expanding Primary Care Access and Workforce Act.

The nation faces a shortage of health professionals and continues to experience an ever growing, aging and increasingly diverse population, alongside health professionals that are nearing retirement age. Also important to note is the fact that national estimates of workforce shortages are often masked by significant distributional disparities – particularly in rural and certain inner-city populations that experience greater and more persistent shortages. Recent cuts in public health funding have already caused the nation's public health agencies to struggle to provide basic health and prevention services, including the ability to provide a workforce capable of meeting the increased and changing demands of the nation's health needs. Additionally, we are concerned that current and future cuts will be compounded by programs that are set to expire soon.

We are pleased that your bill would reauthorize essential public health programs, and provide robust and uninterrupted funding to support a well-prepared workforce and expand health care delivery sites. By supporting and strengthening current workforce investments, the nation will be better poised to more effectively fill the primary and preventive care gaps.

Thank you for your commitment to addressing our nation's primary care challenges by supporting a strong workforce and infrastructure to create a healthier nation.

Sincerely,

Georges C. Benjamin, MD  
Executive Director