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Support \$1 million to Combat COPD, the 4th Leading Cause of Death

March 9, 2009

Dear Colleague

Please join me in sending a letter to Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Walsh requesting that they appropriate up to \$1 million for FY 2010 for planning activities to combat chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD is the 4th leading cause of death in the United States, however most people have never heard of COPD and very little data and information are gathered on the disease. COPD is a term used to describe the obstruction of airflow associated primarily with emphysema and chronic bronchitis. CDC estimates that 24 million Americans have COPD, but that only half of them know it, highlighting the need for ongoing public education and awareness.

The CDC has expressed their interest in conducting research on COPD within their National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, but needs funding from Congress to establish this program. In other disease areas, the CDC tracks the nation's health and plans for the future through regular health surveys and data collection, also called surveillance. Expanding the COPD surveillance system is necessary to identify trends in this disease; identify disparities in use of health care and health status; and support health services and biomedical research. All of this information is crucial in making changes in public policies, programs and public health infrastructure to cure and treat COPD.

On behalf of the 130,000 people who will die of COPD this year and the millions of people who don't even know they have it, please join us in supporting \$1 million for FY2010 for planning activities to combat COPD at CDC.

If you have questions about this letter or want to sign on, please contact Michaelleen Crowell (Lewis) at 5-3801 or Michaelleen.crowell@mail.house.gov or Mike Anway (Stearns) at 5-5744 or mike.anway@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

John Lewis
Member of Congress

Cliff Stearns
Member of Congress