

# Protecting Hearts and Health in the FY26 Appropriations Budget

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains the leading cause of death and disability in the U.S., affecting 121.5 million people and accounting for 1 in every 8 health care dollars spent. Yet despite decades of progress, mortality rates are rising again, especially in rural communities. At a time when chronic diseases account for 90% of health care costs, recent proposals from the administration threaten to eliminate or slash the very programs that keep people healthy – from biomedical research to disease prevention and school safety.

## What's at stake?

### ***National Institutes of Health (NIH): Cuts to Research, Cures and Careers***

- The administration cut \$2.7 billion from NIH in FY25 and proposed a 40% cut and major reorganization in FY26.
- Over 2,600 grants have been canceled, affecting labs in nearly every congressional district.
- NIH research fuels innovation, supports more than 300,000 jobs and supports nearly every medical breakthrough.

### ***The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Chronic Disease Prevention Guttled***

- Critical CDC programs — including the Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, Division for Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity and the Office on Smoking and Health — are being eliminated.
- CDC's chronic disease center sends 80% of its funding directly to states and communities.
- Eliminating these programs would halt progress on heart disease, Alzheimer's, diabetes and more.

### ***HEARTS Act: Saving Lives from Cardiac Arrest in Schools***

- About 23,000 children suffer from a cardiac arrest each year; survival improves 7x when schools have an automated external defibrillator (AED).
- The bipartisan HEARTS Act, passed unanimously and signed into law in 2024, ensures schools are equipped and trained to respond, including the development of cardiac emergency response plans, which can more than double survival rates.
- But the program needs funding to help us build a Nation of Lifesavers and double the chance of survival from cardiac arrest.

### **The American Heart Association urges Congress to:**



#### **Provide at least \$51.3 billion for NIH**

in FY26 to restore canceled grants and protect the agency from cuts.



#### **Reject the proposed elimination of and invest in the CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP)**

and restore and sustain previously eliminated programs.



#### **Fund the HEARTS Act at \$50 million**

in FY26 to ensure schools are prepared for cardiac emergencies.



#### **Protect public health infrastructure**

that safeguards lives, strengthens our workforce and lowers health care costs.