April 28, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As the Appropriations committee makes important decisions about Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding, we request your support for the public health Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). COVID-19 has exposed major flaws in our public health data systems. Without access to modern, interoperable data systems, our public health officials are not able to adequately respond to COVID-19 or future public health threats. COVID-19 is not the first, nor will it be the last, public health crisis our country faces. As such, we urge you to provide funding of at least $250 million for CDC's DMI in FY 2022.

The DMI is helping to create a standards-based interoperable public health infrastructure, ensuring all systems can communicate and share data seamlessly with one another; advancing standards so that information can be stored and shared across systems; and facilitating complete and timely reporting so that our public health system has essential data on race, ethnicity, pregnancy status, treatments, and co-morbidities that are critical for achieving equity in public health response.

To date Congress has acknowledged that CDC data systems modernization is an indispensable component of public health and pandemic response, by providing nearly $1 billion for DMI, through annual and supplemental appropriations. However, further funding is needed to ensure we are ready to combat the next pandemic or other serious public health threat. We must complete the foundational investment of $1 billion in DMI and commit to providing robust, sustained annual funding to keep systems up to date with evolving technology.

The nation faces an unprecedented challenge in addressing the global COVID-19 pandemic and a responsibility to create a public health infrastructure capable of responding to future emergencies. Now, more than ever, it is critical for CDC to have a strong national public health surveillance system that detects and facilitates immediate response to and containment of emerging health threats. We need an interoperable, high-speed, networked health system—from

laboratories to health care facilities to public health authorities—with fast, secure, and reliable data in order to protect Americans from health threats. Modernization is not just network upgrades; it is a commitment to building a world-class data workforce and data systems that are ready for the next public health emergency.

As the Appropriations Committee completes its work for FY 2022, we encourage you to include at least $250 million in funding for the DMI. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

<div align="center">Sincerely,</div>

_____   _____
Scott H. Peters   Member of Congress
Member of Congress

__/s/_____
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

__/s/_____
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

__/s/_____
John B. Larson
Member of Congress

__/s/_____
Lucy McBath
Member of Congress

__/s/_____
Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress

__/s/_____
Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress

__/s/_____
Nikema Williams
Member of Congress