

November 1, 2022

The Honorable Shalanda Young
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Delivered electronically

Dear Director Young:

As the Administration develops its Fiscal Year 2024 budget proposal, we are writing to urge you to include an increase in funding for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) in its staffing and administrative support for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF).

As you may know, the USPSTF is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts that issues evidence-based recommendations about preventive services that Americans should receive. If the USPSTF issues an A or B rating for a clinical preventive service, individual and group health plans must cover the service with zero cost-sharing for patients. As a result, USPSTF recommendations are critical drivers of patient access and adoption of preventive screenings.

New technologies have the potential to improve primary care, advance greater equity, increase access to screening, and save lives. New technologies will make screening more accessible and more affordable. New technologies have the potential to detect diseases or predisposition for conditions earlier, empowering primary care physicians to work with their patients to reduce the risk of morbidity and death. And new technologies offer opportunities to close screening gaps for the most vulnerable and underserved communities by conveniently providing preventive screenings closer to the communities where people live and work. However, new technologies can only get in the hands of the patients if the USPSTF has the capacity to thoroughly review and recommend clinical preventive services in a timely manner.

The ACA shifted the USPSTF's role from a scientific advisory board to a body with the authority to influence federal benefit and coverage requirements and yet the current funding level does not reflect this increased role. Currently, the USPSTF is only mandated to review the latest science on a particular topic and update their recommendations once every five years, meaning there is significant lag time between the introduction of a new and innovative preventive service and review by the USPSTF. This delay can prevent patients from having affordable access to the newest, life-saving screening technology.

In the President's FY 2023 Budget, the Administration proposed level funding of \$11.542 million for AHRQ's USPSTF operations.¹ In its Congressional Budget Justification document AHRQ states that under level funding the number of recommendations completed by USPSTF would be reduced from 10-12 down to as few as 8, because "the cost for evidence reviews has increased over time; therefore, with the same level of support the USPSTF may complete fewer evidence

¹ [HHS FY 2023 Budget in Brief | HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov/budget/fy-2023/budget-in-brief/)

reviews each year.”² Furthermore, in response to a Congressional inquiry, the Director of AHRQ indicated that the USPSTF could complete more reviews and modify its processes to be more nimble and better adapt to medical advancements if the funding level for its support of the USPSTF is increased.

To improve access to these lifesaving screening technologies, we urge the Administration to include an increase in funding for the USPSTF in the FY 2024 President’s Budget.

Sincerely,

AdvaMed
American Gastroenterological Association
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association
Association of American Cancer Institutes
California Life Sciences
Colon Cancer Coalition
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
Digital Diagnostics Inc
Elekta
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Free ME from Lung Cancer
Fujirebio Diagnostics, Inc
Geneoscopy, Inc
Global Colon Cancer Association
GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer
Guardant Health
Healthcare Leadership Council
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network
IONIQ Sciences
KRAS Kickers
Laboratory Corporation of America Holdings
Medical Device Manufacturers Association (MDMA)
ONE CANCER PLACE, Inc
PERSOWN, Inc
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Renalis Health, Inc
Renalytix Inc.
SPARK Neuro
Synergic Medical Technologies
ViewRay, Inc

Cc: The Honorable Xavier Becerra, Secretary of U.S. Health and Human Services
Cc: Dr. Robert Otto Valdez, Director of Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

² [Budget Estimates for Appropriations Committees, Fiscal Year 2023 | Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(ahrq.gov\)](#)