**Diabetes Coalition Expresses Concern Over Hill Efforts to Weaken Prevention and Public Health Fund**

WASHINGTON DC – Calling the Prevention and Public Health Fund vital to slowing the diabetes epidemic in the US, the Diabetes Advocacy Alliance (DAA)—a coalition of 19 diabetes-related organizations representing patients, providers, and educators, among others—said today that Congress should keep the Prevention and Public Health Fund (Fund) intact.

The Fund was passed under the 2010 Affordable Care Act. The DAA said that the Fund is vital in transforming America’s health system from one focused only on treating disease to one focused also on prevention and wellness.

“Diabetes is a dangerous and costly epidemic facing Americans and the US economy—and one of the best ways to control the disease and all of its complications is through prevention,” said Martha Rinker, Chief Advocacy Officer of the American Association of Diabetes Educators, a DAA co-chair. “That means investment in strategies that identify diabetes early and help patients take the steps that have been proven to dramatically reduce the risk of the disease. The Prevention and Public Health Fund was created to help encourage this kind of innovation and investment.”

Tekisha Everette, Managing Director of Federal Government Affairs for the American Diabetes Association—also one of the DAA co-chair organizations—said that protecting the Fund would ultimately decrease government and private-sector health costs. “The Prevention and Public Health Fund can save the government and private payers enormously over time by investing in sound, evidence-based screening, lifestyle change, and diabetes control programs. An outstanding example is the National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP), which received funding from the Fund in Fiscal Year 2012, and has been shown to dramatically reduce risk of diabetes.”

The NDPP, which was authorized in 2010 as part of the Affordable Care Act and run out of the Division of Diabetes Translation at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, provides local communities with lifestyle change programs for preventing type 2 diabetes using an evidenced-based approach. This program is designed from a research study led by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases at the National Institutes of Health and supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The lifestyle intervention program showed that modest behavior changes, such as improving food selection and increasing physical activity to at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week, helped participants lose 5% – 7% of their body weight. These lifestyle changes reduced the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58% in people at high risk for the disease. Seniors reduced their risk by 71%. 

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The DAA is a diverse group of 19 patient advocacy organizations, professional societies, trade associations, nonprofit organizations, and corporations, sharing a common goal to defeat diabetes. For more information visit the DAA website at www.diabetesadvocacyalliance.org.