



Missouri Public Health Association

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Missouri Senate
Capitol Building
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Senator:

Yesterday, the legislature took action in an effort to address the Covid-19 global pandemic. As you are aware, public health is the front-line response to COVID-19. Public health professionals identify cases, conduct contact tracing, issue isolation and quarantine orders, case manage all COVID19 cases outside of the hospital, work with hospitals in discharge planning, track the epidemiology, educate the public, etc. We are frankly astonished and shocked that, during the most significant public health outbreak of our time, the supplemental COVID budget bill passed by the legislature has ZERO specific funding for local public health agencies (LPHA) in the state of Missouri. Funding for LPHAs comes from two sources: the Department of Health and Senior Services—which Director Williams has signaled zero allocations to LPHAs—and local governments, be it counties or municipalities that are dealing with their own issues. In short, most LPHAs in our state believe they will not see a dime of this funding. Again, Missouri has the worst public health disaster in our state's history; and Missouri sends ZERO dollars specifically to local public health. This is nothing short of a travesty.

When the budget is taken up in May, we implore the legislature to address this very serious omission of funding to the area that we need most in the middle of a pandemic: LPHAs. LPHAs are on the frontlines and are fighting to keep people throughout the state safe and healthy. Please, fund LPHAs. Their success dictates how soon we all can get back to school, work, play, worship, etc. When public health wins, we all win.

Sincerely,

Lynelle Phillips

Lynelle Phillips RN MPH
MPHA Vice President and Advocacy Chair

Cc: MPHA Board of Directors
Dr. Randall Williams, Director, DHSS