

December 17, 2019

Dear Academic Pediatrician:

On Monday, leaders from the House of Representatives and the Senate announced a major bipartisan agreement to fund the federal government through the remainder of the fiscal year. For the first time in more than two decades, the funding bill will include dedicated funding for gun violence prevention research. It will fund a total of \$25 million for this research at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

This victory would not have been possible without the advocacy of the Academic Pediatric Association, the American Pediatric Society, the Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs, and the Society for Pediatric Research acting together as the Pediatric Policy Council (PPC). It was the advocacy of academic pediatricians that made the difference. The inclusion of funding for gun violence prevention research represents an enormous step forward in our efforts to reduce the injury and death caused by firearms and deserves special celebration. The spending package also includes other priorities of the academic pediatric community, including a \$2.6 billion funding increase for the NIH.

We have watched over the last several years as tragic mass casualty events involving guns—many touching young people where they learn and grow—have continued unabated, and this is to say nothing of the daily acts of gun violence that impact children in communities nationwide. Advancing child health through pediatric research has always been the mission of the PPC. Following the school shooting in Parkland, Florida, and the inspiring advocacy from young people that followed, the PPC stepped up its engagement on federal policy actions to prevent gun violence.

Our ask has been simple: fund research to identify the interventions that will work to reduce the incidence of gun violence. The PPC was instrumental in developing the funding request that led to this important bipartisan agreement, thanks to our organizations' unique perspectives at the intersection of child health and research.

We hope to build upon this initial funding in the coming years to foster the development of an area of study that has been largely dormant for decades.

Together, we can shape public policy to the benefit of child health, and Monday's announcement should serve as a reminder of the importance of the academic pediatrician voice. Thank you for your dedication to child health and for your steadfast commitment to advocacy on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Scott Denne, MD
Chair, Pediatric Policy Council