

April XX, 2025

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
House Appropriations Committee
Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support the Health and Safety of America's Workforce with Recommended FY 2026 Funding of OSHA at \$655.5 Million and Restoration of Critical NIOSH Research Programs

Dear Chairs Aderholt and Capito and Ranking Members DeLauro and Baldwin:

The United States currently finds itself at a transformative moment where investment in the safety of our nation's workers will have great benefits to our economy. Our nation's workers underpin the successes of businesses throughout the country and the federal agencies that support their safety are critical to our domestic health. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) are foundational to supporting businesses with quality data, compliance assistance, research and program activities that ensure safe workplaces exist throughout the nation. **Now, more than ever, these agencies demand our support.**

Fiscal Year 2026 needs for workplace safety

The Fiscal Year 2026 fiscal year budget process comes as several federal agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NIOSH, and the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), have faced both significant personnel and program recissions. These recissions and efforts to downsize agencies' respective workforces have the potential to jeopardize the critical advances businesses have made to alleviate occupational safety risks such as opioid overdoses, falls, suicide, workplace violence and exposure to hazardous substances and environments. Our organizations urge your committees to support the evidence-based programs at these occupational safety and health agencies and their vital efforts to reduce and/or eliminate workplace hazards that lead to serious injury and even death.

As you craft the FY 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, the undersigned organizations strongly encourage your committees to support funding for OSHA at a minimum of \$655.5 million. We also ask that you support funding for NIOSH, including its Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (AgFF) sector program, Education and Research Centers (ERCs), Training Project Grants (TPCs), the Total Worker Health (TWH) program, the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA), Respirator Approval Program (RAP) and other occupational safety and health research programs. While much of this work

has been stopped due to United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Reduction in Force (RIF) notices, the work of a full and healthy NIOSH is intertwined with USDOL safety efforts. Both are critical to advancing business innovations that eliminate workplace serious injuries and fatalities. We strongly encourage you to fund NIOSH at \$263.7 million and include language requiring the agency be reconstituted with the same level of staff carrying out the same functions as existed on March 30, 2025, one day prior to the HHS RIF.

Data from 2023 shows there is more work to do to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities in workplaces throughout the United States. OSHA and NIOSH are critical in advancing that work. In 2023, over 4 million workers sustained medically consulted injuries and 4,543 workers died.¹ Broken down, every day 12 workers die on-the-job and over 11,150 workers sustained potentially life changing injuries. These are not just statistics, but instead represent parents, young workers and community leaders. Additionally, these injuries and fatalities cost the United States economy \$176.5 billion dollars.² These tragedies show clearly why continued investment in occupational safety and health is needed.

OSHA

OSHA is the preeminent federal agency which ensures safe and healthy workplaces for America's workers by providing training, outreach, education, and compliance assistance to employers and employees. OSHA also sets and enforces standards on a host of critical safety issues such as personal protective equipment (PPE), hazard communication and other workplace safety topics. OSHA is far from a punitive federal agency, as a large share of its efforts focus on voluntary cooperation between private businesses, labor organizations, and safety partners to ensure millions of American workers can return home safe and sound after their shift. An overwhelming number of the nation's businesses want to do the right thing and protect their people. A strong and vibrant OSHA is critical to that mission. Without a robust OSHA, injuries and fatalities on the job may rise and lead to detrimental business impacts such as workforce shortages, supply chain disruptions, and occupational exposures to communicable illness – which we saw during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The work of OSHA touches nearly every single city, town, and state in the United States. Without safe and healthy workers who can contribute meaningfully to the economy, local economies will suffer, affecting the bottom lines of small and medium-sized businesses everywhere.

NIOSH

NIOSH is the primary federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related illness and injury. NIOSH protects the nation's 164 million workers from the types of injuries and illnesses that cost the United States economy \$250 billion annually. NIOSH gathers information, conducts scientific research, and translates knowledge into products and services to support workplace safety. NIOSH research, evaluations and certifications are known by businesses and workers nationwide. NIOSH tackles a voluminous number of challenges, advancing vital efforts that ensure that respirators used by 50 million American workers function effectively, that fire fighters avoid cancer, that coal miners avoid lung disease, that drivers are focused on the road and not distractions, that workplaces

¹ <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/work/work-overview/work-safety-introduction/>

² <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/work/costs/work-injury-costs/>

address substance use disorders brought about by the growing scourge of opioids, and that the next generation of health and safety professionals are ready to monitor potential occupational health threats at workplaces throughout the country.

This work is carried out in research laboratories across the country, including Alaska, Colorado, Georgia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Washington State and West Virginia. In addition to the impact from the loss of NIOSH's work, communities in each of these states will feel the immediate and long-reaching economic harm of these workforce eliminations.

In order to ensure the health and safety of our nation's workers, we respectfully request that you provide FY 2026 funding for OSHA at a minimum of \$655.5 million and support the funding and restoration of critical occupational safety and health programs historically operated by NIOSH which advance the success of American business.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.