United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 14, 2026

The Honorable Jay Battacharya, MD, PhD
Acting Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329

The Honorable Kyle Diamantas, JD
Acting Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20993

Dear Acting Director Bhattacharya and Acting Commissioner Diamatas:

I write to urge the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to restore funding and staffing cuts made by the administration to federal and state food safety programs, including the Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network (FoodNet), Public Health Infrastructure Grants, Preventive Services Block Grant, Food Safety Inspection Service, and Food Emergency Response Network.[1] As a currently uncontrolled large foodborne outbreak across the country continues, cuts to these programs are impacting our nation's ability to prevent, detect, and contain foodborne illnesses and protect public health.

Last year the administration made reporting of foodborne illnesses caused by parasite *Cyclospora* optional when it cut the CDC FoodNet program's tracking of ten pathogens, including *Cyclospora*, known to cause foodborne illness, to just two. Similarly in April 2025, the administration suspended the FDA's Food Emergency Response Network program following the firings of key scientists as part of the administration's layoffs of federal public health employees.[2] More recently, the administration terminated Congressionally-appropriated Public Health Infrastructure Grants and Preventive Services Block Grants, which pay for state health department staff, laboratory capacity, diagnostics, tracking, and surveillance.

Currently, a still uncontrolled outbreak of *Cyclospora*, first detected on May 1, has spread across at least 31 states.[3] As of July 13, nearly 2,800 confirmed cases and 87 hospitalizations of *Cyclosporiasis* have been reported as part of this outbreak.[4] This outbreak has resulted in at least 86 hospitalizations so far. While *Cyclosporiasis* is treatable with antibiotics when diagnosed, it continues to pose a risk of severe dehydration and other health issues that can result in higher health care costs and lost productivity.

Preventing foodborne illnesses like *Cyclosporiasis* and expediently detecting and responding to outbreaks are life-saving and economically essential functions of the FDA, CDC, and state health

1 February 19, 2026 letter from Senators to Health & Human Services Secretary Kennedy on cuts to CDC grants.
2 https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-fda-suspends-food-safety-quality-checks-after-staff-cuts-2025-04-17/
3 https://www.fox9.com/news/cyclosporiasis-minnesota-explosive-diarrhea-outbreaks-being-tracked-officials
4 https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/keep-mi-healthy/infectious-diseases/infectious-disease-outbreaks; https://apnews.com/article/cyclospora-outbreak-michigan-31e5e0034d39e85c844065a2bd593ecb

and agriculture departments working in collaboration and coordination with one another. The recent actions taken by the administration have significantly weakened federal and state defenses and undermined nationwide coordination against foodborne illnesses, particularly when there is no longer a central location for reporting and comparing data across state lines.[5]

As Americans look to our public health agencies to keep their families safe and healthy, I urge you to fully restore the FERN, Food Safety Inspection Service, FoodNet, Public Health Infrastructure Grant, and Preventive Services Block Grant programs. I also urge you to continue to work closely with state public health departments to ensure they have the resources and expertise to efficiently detect and respond to foodborne illnesses and take proactive steps to keep our food supply safe.

Sincerely,

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

5 https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/foodborne-disease/cdc-cuts-back-foodborne-illness-surveillance-program