



August 25, 2011

Thomas R. Frieden, MD, MPH
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road, NE,
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Frieden,

During this turbulent fiscal season, the undersigned members of the National Violence Prevention Network would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks for your continuing strong support of the National Violent Death Reporting System during this fiscal year. While your funding challenges will certainly continue to grow, we urge you continue your commitment to expand this small but critical public health program in CDC's proposed FY 2013 budget.

Our Network has been very active again this year in seeking to assure increased program visibility, resources and understanding in Congress and at the Office of Management and Budget. We continue to highlight the need for this surveillance program in the states and its capacity and potential to flourish as a national resource -- especially if it were to become available in all 50 states and U.S. territories. We have been working to support the CDC request of \$5 million in FY 2012 and a similar increase in FY 2013. We believe it is crucial to show some level of growth over the current \$3.5 million funding level.

Clearly, the challenge of reducing violent deaths remains even as budgets tighten. More than 50,000 Americans suffer violent deaths each year. And on top of this staggering loss of life, most communities lack data about the circumstances surrounding these deaths. An issue of particular concern is the alarming high rate of suicides among active and former military personnel. It is imperative that we work towards national implementation of the NVDRS program so that we can better understand and work to reverse these tragic trends.

As you know, data collected through NVDRS has lead to implementation of effective prevention programs from Oregon to Massachusetts and to reductions in the rates of suicide, specific types of crime, and other violent deaths. In the states with CDC grants, the program continues to build momentum. Program data is being used to track and provide new insights to intimate partner violence and other homicides. Many states are also working on veterans and teen suicide, and violence against children. Data from NVDRS has helped states improve forensic toxicological capabilities and strengthen public health and law enforcement communications and infrastructure.

In conclusion, we offer our profound thanks for your support during trying times and stand ready to continue to work with you and other CDC officials to help reinforce the

need for this important state-based surveillance network. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Bonta at pbonta@acpm.org or 202-466-2044, x110.

Sincerely,

Alaska Violent Death Reporting System
American Association of Suicidology
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Psychiatric Association
American Osteopathic Association
Emergency Nurses Association
Georgia Violent Death Reporting System
Kentucky Department for Public Health
Kentucky Injury Prevention and Research Center
Kentucky Violent Death Reporting System
Massachusetts Violent Death Reporting System
Mental Health America
National Association of Medical Examiners
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Organization for People of Color against Suicide
North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System Program
Ohio Violent Death Reporting System
Oregon Violent Death Reporting System
Police Foundation
Rhode Island Violent Death Reporting System
Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research
Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE)
Suicide Prevention Action Network USA