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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3812

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The Hon. Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you begin crafting the Fiscal Year 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, I respectfully request you provide at least \$4 million for the National Personal Protective Technologies Lab's (NPPTL) respirator approval program (RAP) and respiratory protection research and service portfolio.

Respiratory protection is the cornerstone of NPPTL activities. As part of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), NPPTL is solely responsible for the nation's respiratory protection approvals, and it is the Federal government's trusted source for respiratory protection information dissemination, research, and science policy. During the pandemic, the heightened focus on respiratory protection created an increased demand for respirator information including innovation, stockpiling, PPE supply chain resiliency and fighting counterfeits. Accordingly, NPPTL requires additional funding to respond to the challenges being asked of it. Yet, NPPTL funding has neither kept pace with the increased demand for their services and expertise, nor other operating expenses. For FY23 and FY24, the PPT line item received \$23 million, with NPPTL receiving approximately \$15 million for program operations¹. Should NPPTL receive increased funding, it could support the following essential RAP activities:

- **Implementing long-overdue updates to the online portal where manufacturers can view progress of their applications.** As respirator applications get closer to the final step, manufacturers can better plan their product launch and outreach efforts. Right now, approval information comes only at the end of the process. Greater transparency in the approval progress will help ensure respirators are available to users in a timelier manner.


¹ CDC's Working Capital Fund (42 USC 231) demands "reimbursements" of appropriated funds for various business services of component agencies. (See: Cons. Approps Act, 2012, [PL 112-74](#), STAT. 1070)

- **Creating a system for automatic updates to the NIOSH Certified Equipment List (CEL)**, a database of NIOSH's respirator approvals. Right now, NPPTL staff members manually update this database. In a pandemic, a lag in updates would create a risk to respirator users and employers needing to validate the approval or validity of a respirator model.
- **Allowing NPPTL to add additional staff**, in number and duration, as needed to respond to the flow and volume of respirator approval applications. This will prevent the excessive application processing delays, which have occurred in the past.

Each respirator application represents an advancement in worker protection. The 50 million U.S. respirator users, including fire fighters, construction workers, health care workers, those in manufacturing and more, deserve the most advanced respiratory protective equipment. The first step to this is increasing respirator research and approval capacity at NPPTL.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Summer Lee
Member of Congress