



June 21, 2013

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Senate Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Moran:

As you work to draft the FY 2014 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill, the National Safety Council, American Society of Safety Engineers, and American Industrial Hygiene Association urge you to, at a minimum, fund the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) at their FY 2012 program levels and ensure that the agencies have the resources necessary to fully fulfill their lifesaving missions.

Each day more than 5,000 workers sustain disabling injuries on the job, 11 workers die from an unintentional injury and 146 workers die from work-related diseases. The burden costs industry and citizens an estimated \$346 billion per week.

OSHA works to ensure safe working conditions for America's workers by setting and enforcing standards and providing training, outreach, education, and assistance to employers. OSHA regulations address issues such as the use of personal protective equipment, permissible exposure limits to hazardous materials, and industry-specific safety procedures. OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program offers free and confidential advice to small and medium-sized businesses striving to improve their safety systems. The agency's cooperative programs, such as the Voluntary Protection Programs and Alliance program, offer ways for businesses and organizations to work cooperatively with the agency to reduce workplace fatalities and incidents.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is the primary federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related illness and injury. NIOSH provides national leadership in the field by gathering

information, conducting scientific research, and translating the knowledge learned into products and services to support workplace safety.

NIOSH provides many important programs, among which are the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (AgFF) sector program and Education and Research Centers (ERCs). The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industries have the highest fatality rates of any industry, with 566 deaths in 2011. Most AgFF operations are small; nearly 78 percent of employers in these industries employ fewer than 10 workers and meet certain enforcement exclusion criteria, which results in the exclusion of numerous AgFF workers from many federal labor protection laws, such as those enforced by OSHA. Directed by Congress, NIOSH established Centers for Agricultural Disease and Injury Research, Education and Prevention in 1990 in response to evidence that agricultural workers were suffering higher rates of injury and illness than other U.S. workers. Today, the initiative includes nine regional centers, and one national center to address children's farm safety. These centers have conducted research leading to evidence-based standards that save lives. It is the only substantive federal effort to meet the obligation to ensure safe working conditions for workers in one of our nation's most vital production sectors.

NIOSH supports education and research in occupational health through academic degree programs and research opportunities. With an aging occupational safety and health workforce, ERCs are essential to training the next generation of professionals. The Centers establish academic, labor and industry research partnerships to achieve these goals. With the ERCs supplying a good portion of the country's OSH graduates who will go on to fill OSH professional roles, the elimination of the ERCs would create a crisis in the safety profession by substantially decreasing the number and quality of trained OSH professionals, and resulting in the elimination of OSH educational services to over 10,000 U.S. businesses.

In order to ensure the health and safety of our nation's workers, we respectfully request that you, at a minimum, continue to fund OSHA and NIOSH at their FY 12 program levels. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Janet Froetscher
President & CEO
National Safety Council



Richard Pollock, CSP
President
American Society of Safety Engineers



Barbara Dawson, CIH, CSP
President
American Industrial Hygiene Association