



National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NACCHO STATEMENT ON ONGOING MEASLES OUTBREAKS

“This disease of the past is becoming a threat of the present.”

by Lori Tremmel Freeman, CEO

Washington, DC, April 23, 2019 – “Yesterday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed there have been [626 individual cases of measles diagnosed](#) across 22 states in the U.S. since the first of this year. We are on track to have the highest number of measles cases in the U.S. in 25 years, and for many—this disease of the past is becoming a threat of the present.

“626 cases are far too many. These cases are not just numbers—they represent sick children, missed days of work, and an incredible financial strain on our tax dollars that must be pulled away from other public health priorities.

“The image of a young child covered in the measles rash and suffering from an incredibly high fever is heartbreaking. No parent wants to see their child in pain, and all want to protect their children from harm. Even so, some well-intentioned parents have chosen not to protect their children from this devastating disease based on discredited and false information. In doing so, they are putting their children, themselves and others in their communities at risk.

“Simply put, vaccines are the best defense against the threat of vaccine-preventable diseases and play a vital role in protecting the health of communities. Immunization has

been one of the most successful and effective public health measures available to populations worldwide, with an unparalleled record of disease reduction and prevention.

“The success of vaccines, however, has made it is easier to take our health for granted. Most Americans don’t remember the dangerous impact of vaccine-preventable diseases that have been made so rare and have allowed fear of the vaccine to displace fear of the illness.

“NACCHO is the voice of the nation’s nearly 3,000 local health departments who are on the front lines of tracking and responding to these preventable outbreaks. Our members in hard-hit communities are working tirelessly to halt the spread of measles in their area by educating the public, offering measles vaccinations, conducting outreach within their communities, and monitoring and tracking the spread of disease. They will continue to do so until these outbreaks can be brought under control. But it is up to all of us to redouble our efforts to educate our family members, friends and neighbors about the role we must all play in preventing these outbreaks before they start. Our nation’s children should not have to suffer from a serious illness we have known how to prevent for years.”

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About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation’s nearly 3,000 local health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.