March 13, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As organizations committed to improving the lives of Americans impacted by chronic illnesses, we write to express our strong support for a request to revive the psoriatic disease initiative within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. This important funding would advance necessary public health research to explore the connection between psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis and comorbidities, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, depression, types of cancers and inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD).

Additional research – including from a public health perspective – is needed to help better understand the relationship between psoriatic disease and comorbidities and to allow intervention to address the presence of other chronic conditions. The CDC has a long history of supporting public health research, including work that has resulted in the development of self-management education tools, which help Americans with chronic illnesses better manage their overall health and well-being. This funding would support efforts at the CDC to develop a self-management tool specific to psoriatic disease which would assist our patient communities better manage their condition and greatly improve their quality of life.

Supporting the psoriatic disease public health initiative would also enable CDC to revisit previous research and build upon the foundation laid in the roadmap to develop the public health agenda for psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. This CDC roadmap identifies a number of challenges, gaps and opportunities to deploy public health strategies and tools to better support Americans with these conditions. Unfortunately, a lack of follow-on funding has limited progress going forward, but restoring funding for the program in fiscal year 2020 would revive this critical research.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and strongly support inclusion of funding for the psoriatic disease initiative within the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Act.

Sincerely,