



"PUBLIC HEALTH IS THE HEART OF  
NEW YORK CITY!"

MEDIA RELEASE

## Say NO to Bloomberg's Unhealthy Budget

Contact: Mary Li, Commission on the Public's Health System [212-246-0803](tel:212-246-0803) - [646-267-1135](tel:646-267-1135)  
Kristin Goodwin, Housing Works, 347-473-7450

**WHO :** The People's Budget Coalition for Public Health

**WHAT:** Millions of public health dollars are being dis-invested from our children and our communities including Child Health Clinics, the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative, HIV Prevention, Mental Health, our public hospital system HHC, STD Clinics, and the ELIMINATION of the Office of Minority Health!

**WHERE:** Steps of City Hall

**WHEN:** Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 4 P.M.

**June 6, 2012.** The People's Budget Coalition for Public Health, a coalition of community organizations and labor, will hold a rally on the steps of City Hall this afternoon. The rally was held to protest the Mayor's proposed public health budget cuts - cuts that are devastating to residents of low-income, medically under-served communities. Most of these cuts are in programs that the City Council has funded over a period of years in order to meet unmet public health needs.

Mary Li, coordinator of the People's Budget Coalition for Public Health, said "**City Council should restore these programs that they themselves have recognized as important to the communities they represent.**"

Kristin Goodwin, director of NYC Policy and Organizing at Housing Works, said "**Mayor Bloomberg continues to cut funding for health programs that serve the most vulnerable New Yorkers and keep people healthy. As HIV infections continue to increase, HIV prevention services are slashed. As more families lose access to health care coverage through employers, school-based health clinics get cut. So many of our most needed services are essential for the health of our city. We call on the City Council to restore funding for public health programs – we can't afford to sacrifice New York's health for the sake of the budget.**"

The Mayor's proposed public health cuts in the budget include:

- a \$ 2.5 million cut to the Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative. For the past couple of years, funding for this initiative has decreased by half a million dollars each fiscal year, consecutively. It used to be funded at \$5 million and is targeted to community districts with high infant mortality rates to improve outcomes in reducing infant mortality and racial/ethnic health



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disparities. The Mayor's Budget persists in not base-lining these important dollars and City Council has been funding it at lower and lower levels.

Joyce Hall, executive director of the Federation of County Networks, said, "**The infant mortality rate has steadily dropped citywide in recent years, but persists at higher levels in Black and Latino neighborhoods. Every dollar cut from this vital program means fewer pregnant women and women with children under 2 years of age who will get education and help obtaining care that can prevent prematurity, low birth weight, and other life-threatening conditions for both mother and baby.**"

- a \$5 million cut to Child Health Clinics, a community source of primary care for children. There were 48 Child Health Clinics in 1988 and today there are only 19 left. Child Health Clinics have been providing primary care and immunizations for NYC children for over a century. With Health and Hospitals Corporation's \$1.2 billion budget deficit, the community needs City Council to fund this resource of local primary care for children.
- the ELIMINATION of the Office of Minority Health. At a time when people are losing and having health care access problems in immigrant and communities of color, it is irresponsible of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to completely eliminate the city's central office for tackling racial and ethnic health disparities.
- a \$1.4 million cut to HIV Prevention.
- a \$1.25 million cut to Children Under 5 Mental Health Initiative.
- over \$1.5 million cut to Mental Hygiene PEGs in Chemical Dependency and Developmental Disabilities clinics.
- a \$461,000 cut to STD clinics in high schools. The NYC Department of Health
- \$429,000 cut to the East Harlem Asthma Center of Excellence and Bureau of Immunization.

The City Council's help to get these issues prioritized and funding restored is necessary to stop the Mayor's whittling away of New York City's public health safety-net.