

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 17, 2014

The Honorable Thomas Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of the Director / Office of the Chief of Staff
Mailstop D14
1600 Clifton Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Dr. Frieden:

As an agency that has one of the most successful programs combatting women's heart disease, we are writing to urge the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prioritize combating this number one killer of women in the country. We firmly believe that through your leadership and focus, we can make important strides toward improving women's heart health.

Women's heart disease continues to be under-researched, misdiagnosed, and left untreated too often. While not enough is being done to recognize the differences and appropriately treat heart disease in women, we believe that your leadership could have a huge impact on combating women's cardiovascular disease. Heart disease kills more women than all cancers combined and, since 1984, more women than men have died from heart disease. Yet, for the last 50 years, women's heart treatment has largely been based on medical research on men – often to negative results. For example, 42 percent of women who have a heart attack die within one year, as compared to 24 percent of men. We also know that women have more repeat heart attacks and greater risk of stroke after a heart attack.

Similar to how we worked alongside non-profit leaders to change the trajectory of breast cancer, we know that the federal government can make a significant impact with a targeted investment in research and programs that will save women's lives. Given that there is bipartisan support for the expansion of WISEWOMAN, we ask that you prioritize expanding WISEWOMAN to states that do not currently have the program. In addition, we would like you to consider ways CDC could support additional education of physicians as there is a critical need for educating doctors about gender differences and heart health.

Every minute, a woman dies from heart disease. We cannot let another year pass with 400,000 more women dying because these disparities are not addressed. Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We want to be as helpful as possible in working with you to identify areas where we can address this important issue.

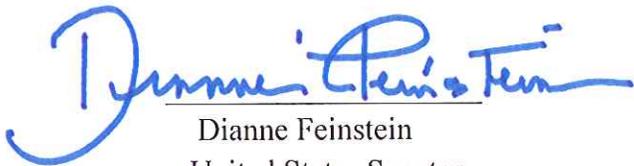
Sincerely,



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



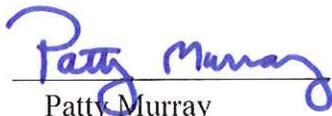
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



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Barbara Boxer
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Maria Cantwell
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United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
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