Template Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

According to new data recently released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [INSERT PERCENTAGE] of [INSERT STATE] residents have been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). COPD is a serious lung disease that over time makes it difficult to breathe. Annually, COPD kills more than 130,000 Americans and is the [INSERT RANK] leading cause of death in [INSERT STATE].

Yet, until now no exact data were available on how many people have been diagnosed at the State level. In [INSERT STATE], COPD appears to be most prevalent among individuals ages [INSERT AGE] and higher and affects [ENTER GENDER] ([ENTER PERCENTAGE)] and [ENTER OPPOSITE GENDER] [(ENTER PERCENTAGE)].With these new data we are able to gain a better understanding of where, and among what populations, COPD diagnoses are most prevalent.

COPD is a frequently undiagnosed condition. Often this is because symptoms of COPD, such as shortness of breath, chronic cough, wheezing, and excessive phlegm production, come on slowly and gradually worsen over time. Anyone can have trouble breathing once in a while but for people who have COPD, symptoms that may be shrugged off as a normal sign of aging or being out of shape become more and more debilitating.

But there is something that people can do. Early diagnosis and treatment of COPD can make a world of difference in terms of quality of life. And COPD can be diagnosed right in your doctor's office by taking a simple breathing test called spirometry.

If you or someone you love is experiencing any of the symptoms of COPD, we urge you to take the first step to breathing better – learn more about COPD and talk to your health care provider. For more information on COPD, visit [INSERT LINK] or the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's, *COPD Learn More Breathe Better®* campaign at http://COPD.nhlbi.nih.gov.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Your organization's leader]
[Title]
[Name of your organization]
[Phone]
[Email]