

**FRIENDS of the TITLE V MATERNAL and CHILD HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM**

c/o Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
2030 M Street NW Suite 350, Washington, DC 20036 Tel: 202-775-0436

March 21, 2016

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education & Related Agencies  
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education & Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education & Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education & Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Murray, Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As organizations dedicated to improving the health of all women, children, and families, we strongly urge you to support at least **\$650 million** for the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant in the **FY2017 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education & Related Agencies Appropriations bill**.

The Title V MCH Block Grant is a cost effective, accountable, and flexible funding source used to address the most critical, pressing and unique needs of maternal and child health populations in each state, territory and jurisdiction. In FY 2017, the Title V MCH Block Grant will support population based services that protect and improve the health of all families and will deliver additional services that benefit over half of pregnant women and more than one-third of infants and children.

States and jurisdictions use the Title V MCH Block Grant to design and implement a wide range of maternal and child health programs to fit the needs of their specific populations. Although initiatives may vary among the states and jurisdictions, all of them work with local, state, and national partners to accomplish the following:

- Reduce infant mortality;
- Assure access to quality care, especially for those with low-incomes or limited availability of care;
- Provide and ensure access to comprehensive prenatal and postnatal care to women (especially low-income and at risk pregnant women);
- Increase the number of children who receive regular health assessments and, when indicated, diagnostic and treatment services and appropriate follow-up;
- Provide and ensure access to preventive and primary care services for low-income children as well as rehabilitative services for children with special health needs;
- Implement family-centered, community-based, systems of coordinated care for children with special health care needs (CSHCN); and
- Provide toll-free hotlines and assistance with applying for services to pregnant women with infants and children who are eligible for Title XIX (Medicaid).

Title V MCH Block Grant programs save federal and state governments money by ensuring that people receive preventive services to avoid more costly chronic conditions later in life. They also work diligently to address emerging issues, including the effect of the opioid epidemic on the maternal and child health community as well as response to the Zika virus.

You may also be interested to know that the Title V MCH Block Grant has recently undergone a transformation intended to bring greater accountability while maintaining state flexibility to achieve the mission of improving the health and well-being of all of America's mothers, infants, children, and youth, including children and youth with special healthcare needs and their families. This transformation will allow the program to continuously analyze performance and improve outcomes.

The funding request for FY2017 represents an \$80 million decrease from its highest level of \$730 million in FY2003. We thank you for funding the Title V MCH Block Grant at \$638.2 million in FY2016, but maintain that nondefense discretionary programs cannot continue to bear the brunt of efforts to reduce the federal deficit.

Accordingly, we must preserve this program and urge you to fund the Title V MCH Block Grant at \$650 million in FY2017. For additional information on MCH programs in your state please contact Amy Haddad at the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs at 202-266-3045 or ahaddad@amchp.org.

Thank you for your consideration,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association on Health and Disability

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American Public Health Association

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Association of Public Health Laboratories

Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN)

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric & Neonatal Nurses

Children's Health Fund

CityMatCH

Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)

Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists

Easter Seals

Family Voices

First Focus Campaign for Children

Green & Healthy Homes Initiative

Healthcare Ready

Lakeshore Foundation

March of Dimes

National Association of County and City Health Officials

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials

National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association

National Healthy Start Association

National Partnership for Women & Families

National WIC Association

National Women's Law Center

Nurse-Family Partnership

Organization of Teratology Information Specialists

Parents as Teachers

Play and Learning Strategies

Prevent Blindness

RESULTS

Safe States Alliance

School-Based Health Alliance

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Society for Public Health Education

Society for Women's Health Research

The Arc

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

Trust for America's Health

United States Breastfeeding Committee

ZERO TO THREE