

May 17, 2007

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James T. Walsh
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Walsh:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to request an appropriation of \$750 million for Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant in FY 2008, enabling states to provide vital health care services to millions of pregnant women, infants and children, including those with special health care needs.

The MCH Block Grant provides a wide range of health services and fosters the prevention of disease and disabling conditions for over 33 million women and children across the country. State health agencies use MCH Block Grant funding to provide women with prenatal and postnatal care, screen newborns for genetic and hereditary conditions, support childhood immunizations, reduce infant mortality and prevent childhood accidents and injuries. Block grant dollars also allow states to develop critical infrastructure, including the training of health professionals, developing comprehensive models for community services, and the testing and evaluation of innovative practices. In addition, MCH programs work in coordination with state Medicaid agencies, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman, Infants and Children (WIC) and other programs serving this population. This collaboration ensures that every dollar is used to provide necessary services without duplication.

In FY 2007, \$693 million was appropriated for the MCH Block Grant, \$31 million below the FY 2004 appropriation. Since 2000, the number of women and children served by the MCH Block Grant has increased by over 5 million; however funding has decreased over the same period. Currently, MCH Block Grant funds have enabled states to reach more

than 80 percent of infants, 50 percent of pregnant women and 20 percent of children in this country. Without additional funding, state Maternal and Child Health Bureaus will not be able to continue to meet the increasing demand for services.

We strongly urge you to fund the MCH Block Grant to \$750 million. With these funds, states can resume serving women and children, ensuring that all mothers and their children will have access to high quality health services. Thank you for your time and consideration. For further information, please contact, Joshua Brown or Susan Campbell with the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs at (202) 775-0436.

Sincerely,

Ambulatory Pediatric Association
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Pediatric Society
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Schools of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officers
Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
CityMatch
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
First Focus
March of Dimes Foundation
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)
National WIC Association
Society for Adolescent Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
The Arc of the United States
United Cerebral Palsy