

May 23, 2017

The Honorable Tim Murphy
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Murphy and Ranking Member DeGette,

As the Steering Committee of the Zika Coalition, a group of nearly 100 organizations representing patients, health care providers, persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, public health, and businesses, we thank you for holding today's hearing, *U.S. Public Health Response to the Zika Virus: Continuing Challenges*.

Zika virus continues to be a significant threat to our nation's public health. Over 200 individuals have been infected with Zika through local transmission in two states, while more than 5,000 Americans across the country have been diagnosed with travel-related infections. Among these are roughly 1,800 pregnant women, whose pregnancies are at risk for the serious birth defects Zika can cause. These numbers are dramatically higher in the US territories, where almost 36,000 people and more than 3,800 pregnant women, mostly in Puerto Rico, have been infected locally.

We are pleased that Congress provided \$1.1 billion in supplemental funding to address this crisis in 2016. However, the threat remains real, especially as summer approaches with the height of mosquito season. Efforts to fight Zika must be funded in a sustained, reliable manner so that state, local, and tribal governments, along with other grantees, can plan and implement effective responses both to fight Zika and to mitigate its impacts.

Combating Zika requires a multi-faceted approach that includes robust vector control, research on treatments and vaccines, epidemiological research, reliable and accessible diagnostic tools and an effective public education campaign. Infants impacted by the Zika virus, and their families, will also need a wide array of medical and support services. All of this will require an ongoing, sustained investment of federal resources.

We applaud your commitment to the ongoing fight against Zika, and we look forward to working with you to eliminate this insidious public health threat. The members of the Zika Coalition are committed to advocating for the resources necessary to prevent, diagnose and treat Zika virus until it no longer presents a threat to the health of our nation. For more information, please contact Jaimie Vickery, Director of Federal Affairs for March of Dimes at 202.292-2752 or jvickery@marchofdimes.org.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics
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 Health Officials
Easterseals
Infectious Diseases Society of America
March of Dimes
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Environmental Health Association
National Organization for Rare Disorders
The Arc of the United States
Trust for America's Health