

December 10, 2019

The Honorable Richard Neal  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott  
Chairman  
Committee on Education and Labor  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Neal, Chairman Pallone, and Chairman Scott:

Thank you for taking action to address maternal mortality and morbidity in H.R. 3, the *Lower Drug Costs Now Act*. As national organizations at the forefront of improving outcomes for women and their families, we value the critical investments in public health that you have prioritized, and your recognition of the urgent need to address the maternal health crisis in the United States.

Pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period are critical and fragile times for mothers and infants. Proper prenatal care, early maternal support, and planning to care for a new baby are essential to healthy births and positive maternal and infant outcomes. Unfortunately, for a growing number of women, particularly women of color and Native women, persistent barriers during the prenatal and postpartum periods lead to significant negative health outcomes and, in the most extreme cases, death.

The inclusion of a significant expansion of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program in H.R. 3 makes critical steps to expand the reach of home visiting to address the causes of maternal mortality and morbidity. Evidence-based home visiting programs are an important part of a continuum services for at-risk families, and the impact of voluntary home visiting in rural and urban communities alike has been well documented through research for over three decades. As states and localities seek to deliver proven programs to improve outcomes in this area, your bill allows for the targeting of additional dollars to high-needs communities.

Home visiting empowers, educates, and builds resiliency in mothers facing a variety of adverse circumstances that affect their health in the perinatal period and into their child's early years, thus creating opportunities to impact positive changes for families. We appreciate your recognition that a meaningful increase to MIECHV will positively impact mothers and their families at risk of maternal mortality and morbidity.

Our organizations were grateful for bipartisan support to reauthorize MIECHV in early 2018. That reauthorization meant certainty for states and local programs, who work each day to deliver home visiting programs to families that need them. Because of that reauthorization, we also know that home visiting is already doing valuable and highly recognized work in communities today to address this crisis of poor maternal health outcomes, disparate access to care, and gaps in connections to services.

Thank you again for your leadership to devote these critical resources now to MIECHV, in order to improve the lives of women who are at-risk and their families.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Heart Association  
American Psychological Association  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Center for the Study of Social Policy  
Center for Law and Social Policy  
Child Care Aware® of America  
Child First  
Child Welfare League of America  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Home & Aid  
Children's Home Society of America  
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children  
Every Mother Counts  
Expecting Health at Genetic Alliance  
Family Connects International at the Center for Child and Family Health  
Families USA  
First Five Years Fund  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Healthy Families America  
HIPPI USA  
Hyperemesis Education and Research Foundation  
IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association  
Infant Nutrition Council of America  
Jewish Federations of North America  
March for Moms  
March of Dimes  
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance

MomsRising  
National Alliance of Children's Trust & Prevention Funds  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association for Family, State and Community Engagement  
National Association of Counsel for Children  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Family Support Network  
National Health Law Program  
National Institute for Children's Health Quality  
National SafeCare Training and Research Center at Georgia State University  
National WIC Association  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Nurse-Family Partnership  
Organization of Teratology Information Specialists  
Ounce of Prevention Fund  
Parents as Teachers  
Parent Child+  
Prevent Child Abuse America  
Results for America  
Save the Children  
Save the Mommies  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
Tennyson Center for Children  
The Tatia Oden French Memorial Foundation  
Trust for America's Health  
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee  
Zero to Three