

## **Zika Funds Approved and Shutdown Averted**

On Sept. 28 Congress gave final approval to a \$1.1 billion Zika funding package and the Continuing Resolution (CR) that will keep the government open until Dec. 9. It was signed into law by the president shortly after. Some highlights of the Zika package include:

- \$75 million to reimburse health care provided in states and U.S. territories with active Zika transmission for those without private health insurance.
- \$20 million for maternal and child health special projects of regional and national significance (SPRANS) in Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories.
- \$40 million for community health centers in Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories.
- \$6 million for National Health Service Corps in Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories.
- \$394 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support vector control, technical assistance for states and international response activities. Of this amount, \$44 million is to reimburse states for Public Health Emergency Preparedness funding transferred for Zika response activities.

The CR allows for continued funding of most programs through Dec. 9, 2016, at current levels, minus a .5 percent across-the-board cut (including for the Title V MCH Block Grant). Also included in the bill is \$37 million in new funding to allow the administration to begin implementing programs to address the opioid epidemic as per the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which was signed into law this past summer. However, because the CR covers only for 10 weeks, the prorated amount of new funding that may be used immediately is approximately \$7 million.

Looking forward, AMCHP's policy work will focus on three main areas:

1. Continuing our work with partners across HHS, the ASTHO Affiliate Council and other stakeholders to assure that new federal resources are quickly deployed to state and local communities to strengthen public health prevention and response, and meet the needs of the already affected families. We remain committed to providing our members and their partners with the information and resources needed to contribute effectively to respond to this emergency. We will also begin discussions of what Zika resources should be included in the FY 2018 budget baseline to sustain a strong response and invite your feedback on this to [bewig@amchp.org](mailto:bewig@amchp.org).
2. Because the continuing resolution only runs until Dec. 9, we will keep pressure on Congress to be ready soon after the elections to complete a full year-long spending package – ideally including the proposed small increase to the Title V MCH Block Grant approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee this summer. We will stress that states and their partners need certainty to plan programs and related contracts, sub-grants, etc., rather than inefficiently budgeting from crisis to crisis.
3. AMCHP is looking over the horizon of the election with a view to working with the next president and Congress to begin a 100 Day Agenda to Improve the Health of Women, Children

and Families. AMCHP's board of directors finalize this agenda with the goal of releasing it soon after the elections and building new relationships to benefit MCH early in the next president's term. Stay tuned for more details in November.