The Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs calls on Congress to fund the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant at $705 million for FY2020.

The MCH Block Grant, authorized by Title V of the Social Security Act, is the only federal program of its kind devoted solely to improving the health of all women and children and is guided by the principles of evidence, flexibility, and results. In FY2017, the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Program served nearly 99 percent of all infants in the United States.

Although funding for the MCH Block Grant has slightly increased in recent years, it is still funded at $53.6 million less than in FY2002, when the program was funded at $731.3 million. This inadequate investment comes at a time when the United States’ maternal mortality rate is ranked 46th globally and is among the highest of developed countries.

Additionally, racial and ethnic disparities persist across several indicators, with black infant mortality rates double the rates for white infants and black women three to four times more likely than white women to die during pregnancy or shortly after birth. At the same time, Title V programs are being called upon to invest additional resources to address emerging issues such as the opioid epidemic.

AMCHP supports sustained funding that will enable states to:

- Reduce infant mortality and maternal mortality
- Improve the health of the population through prevention initiatives
- Help newly insured individuals access appropriate health care
- Improve state systems and infrastructure
- Continue to provide wrap-around supports, medical homes, and family-centered, community-based systems of care for children and youth with special health care needs
- Partner with other agencies, schools, and youth organizations to prevent behaviors that place youth at risk

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The Role of AMCHP
For more than 70 years, the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) has worked to protect the health and well-being of all families, especially those who are low-income or underserved. AMCHP represents state public health leaders, including high-level state government officials, directors of maternal and child health (MCH) programs, directors of programs for children with special health care needs, and adolescent health coordinators. Members of AMCHP also include academic, advocacy and community-based family health professionals, as well as families themselves.
The MCH Block Grant improves the health of America’s women and children by:

• **Supporting programs that work.** An analysis by the Office of Management and Budget found that MCH Block Grant-funded programs helped decrease infant mortality rates, prevent disabling conditions, and increase access to care for uninsured children.

• **Addressing the growing needs of women, children, and families.** As our health care system evolves to address emerging issues, the flexible nature of the MCH Block Grant is an invaluable resource for states to meet the needs of their MCH populations, while maintaining high levels of accountability and utilizing evidence-based strategies.

• **Supporting other federally funded programs such as home visiting, community health centers, Healthy Start, WIC, autism initiatives, CHIP, and Medicaid.** The MCH Block Grant invests in needs assessments, planning and policy development, quality assurance, and development of health promotion initiatives and information systems that complement health care services and promote prevention. Close coordination with other health programs assures that funding is maximized and services aren’t duplicated.

Another key component of the MCH Block Grant is the Special Projects of Regional and National Significance (SPRANS). SPRANS funding complements and helps ensure the success of state Title V, Medicaid, and CHIP programs by driving innovation and building capacity to create integrated systems of care for mothers and children.

Examples of innovative projects funded through SPRANS include guidelines for child health supervision from infancy through adolescence (i.e. Bright Futures); nutrition care during pregnancy and lactation; recommended standards for prenatal care; successful strategies for the prevention of childhood injuries; and health and safety standards for out-of-home childcare facilities.

**Additional Information**
For additional information, including state-specific MCH profiles, contact the AMCHP Policy and Government Affairs Team at (202) 775-0436 or ahaddad@amchp.org.