Dear Amy:

We are pleased to share a bit of good news: Last evening, Congress posted a final FY 2015 spending package that includes a $3 million increase for the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant and provides funding through Sept. 30, 2015. This is a positive step in an austere environment. When approved, this will increase the MCH Block Grant from $634 million to $637 million. A chart of all accounts is available here, with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau programs starting on page 131 and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention programs starting on page 134. AMCHP will provide additional analysis of all MCH funding priorities shortly. In a bill that provides largely flat funding for most domestic programs, this small increase is welcome news and further evidence that your voice advocating for MCH populations is being heard.

**What Happens Next:** Both the House and Senate need to vote to approve this bill in the next few days. Early indications are that it is expected to pass, although another very short-term continuing resolution may be necessary to allow enough time for consideration, and other unforeseen snags are possible. We will advise as needed.

**What can you do?** Once finalized, we can turn our full attention to the FY 2016 Appropriations process and the prime opportunity to weigh in early with the new Congress. Those attending the AMCHP Annual Conference in January are encouraged to build on this momentum by scheduling visits with your elected officials, in accordance with your state rules on advocacy. January will be a great time to thank policymakers for recognizing the needs of MCH, to educate them on opportunities presented by the transformation of the Title V MCH Block Grant, create an appetite for the results of your upcoming statewide needs assessment, and highlight the new Title V performance measurement framework. We also have challenges to confront including the return of sequestration and continued budget caps.

There are additional MCH priorities to raise as well, including the need to reauthorize other vital Title V programs including the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (MIECHV), the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP), and Family-to-Family Health Information Centers (F2F-HICs), as well as the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
As previously announced, AMCHP will host an advocacy training webinar on **Wednesday, Jan. 7 from 2:30-4 p.m. EST** to help prepare those who are able to conduct visits in January. We will discuss the difference between lobbying and educational visits as well as go over key messages that we will be asking you to deliver to your elected officials and offer effective communications tips. **RSVP for this training by clicking here.**

In the meantime, please feel free to contact AMCHP staff Amy Haddad ([ahaddad@amchp.org](mailto:ahaddad@amchp.org)) or Brent Ewig ([bewig@amchp.org](mailto:bewig@amchp.org)) with any questions and as always thanks for all you do to improve the health of America’s women, children and families, including those with special health care needs.