



MCH Update from Washington

The past week has been a busy one for maternal and child health policy in Washington and we wanted to be sure to provide you an update!

Averting a Government Shutdown

On Sept. 22 the House passed a Continuing Resolution to keep the government funded at current FY20 levels through Dec. 11. The Senate is expected to pass this bill tomorrow, Sept. 30, just in time to avoid a shutdown!

House Unveils New COVID Relief Proposal with Significant Support for MCH

On Sept. 28, House Appropriations Committee Chair Nita Lowey introduced an updated version of the HEROES Act to provide relief for needs that have arisen in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are thrilled to share that this bill includes significant investments for MCH including **\$500 million in additional funding for the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block grant** and **\$100 million in additional funding for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program**. While we caution that this is just the next step in negotiations between Democrats and Republicans, we are encouraged to see the addition of the funding for Title V, which reflects a greater understanding of the challenges currently faced by MCH programs as well as the role Title V plays in addressing urgent needs.

The House is expected to vote on this legislation tomorrow Sept. 30. AMCHP staff will continue to update you as COVID negotiations progress. For more information on this legislation, please see [here](#).

House to Vote on Postpartum Medicaid Extension Today

The House is scheduled to vote today, Sept. 29, on the Helping MOMS Act, [H.R. 4996](#), sponsored by Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL), Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX) and several other Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle. The Helping MOMS Act would give states the option to extend Medicaid and CHIP coverage of pregnant women to one year postpartum. Currently, many states end such coverage around 60 days postpartum. Extending coverage to a minimum of one year postpartum has been a top priority of AMCHP and maternal health advocates in order to improve access to and continuity of care for women during this time. The bill is expected to pass the House and we will be urging the Senate to follow suit soon!

Earlier this year, AMCHP and partners released a suite of resources about extending Medicaid and CHIP postpartum coverage which can be accessed [here](#).

House Passes Bill Endorsed by AMCHP to Improve Maternal Health Care

On Sept. 21, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the *Maternal Health Quality Improvement Act of 2020* ([H.R. 4995](#)). Led by Rep. Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.) and Rep. Larry Bucshon (R-Ind.), this bill would authorize funding for several programs and activities focused on improving maternal health care in the United States, including the following: the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health; training on implicit bias for maternal health care providers; perinatal quality collaboratives; integrated services for pregnant and postpartum women (pregnancy medical homes); rural obstetric networks; and rural maternal and obstetric care training. The legislation now heads to the U.S. Senate for consideration. The U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions approved similar legislation in June 2019. This bodes well for the possibility of the Senate passing H.R. 4995 before the end of the Congress in early Jan. 2021.