



Now is the time to urge Congress to support families by reauthorizing the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program!

Action Needed: Please call your elected officials on March 12 asking that they include home visiting program reauthorization as part of a bill being finalized known as the Medicare ‘doc fix.’ Please call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected to your elected officials’ offices. When you reach the receptionist please identify yourself as a constituent and ask to speak to the health legislative assistant. You may be asked to leave a voice mail, verbal message or send email, which is fine. It is important to reach both of your U.S. Senators as well as your Representative because we anticipate important decisions will be made soon. *As always, remember that you cannot advocate with federal resources, and any outreach should be done in accordance with your organization’s rules on advocacy.*

A simple suggested message is: **“I’m reaching out to ask for your boss’s support for including the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program reauthorization as a part of a health extenders package with the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate package. This evidence based program has been proven through research to make a difference for some of the most vulnerable children and their families and communities in our state. It will ultimately save taxpayers money through decreased need for health care, remedial education, and other public costs, and increased family self-sufficiency. Participation in home visiting is voluntary – which means parents who participate in the program are committed to their success. That’s the kind of pro-family program we should all get behind and I appreciate your boss’s support in making sure it continues.”** You can of course adapt as needed and it always helps to offer to share examples of success from your state and local perspective.

Educational Message: For those unable to advocate (i.e. urge action on a specific piece of legislation such as the doc fix bill) here’s a message that is educational: **I am contacting you to let you know that the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, which funds evidence-based home visiting for low-income children and families in your District/State will expire this year. The MIECHV program is an accountable program that states are using to improve birth outcomes, early childhood health and development, school readiness, and economic self-sufficiency while reducing child abuse, neglect and injuries, cognitive disabilities, domestic violence, and juvenile delinquency for low-income children and families. MIECHV is helping states achieve these impressive outcomes at significant savings for state and federal government. Please support the MIECHV program.**

Social Media Options: There will be a twitter storm from 2:00 – 3:00 Eastern! Are you on twitter and other social media and looking for sample social media content? [Here's everything](#) you need to join the #HomeVisiting Twitter Storm on Wednesday, March 12, from 2 – 3 pm Eastern.

Background: In 2010 Congress created the MIECHV program to improve health and developmental outcomes for children and families who reside in vulnerable communities through implementation of evidence-based voluntary home visiting programs. The original authorization provided \$1.5 billion for fiscal years 2010 – 2014. Funding for this critical effort will expire on September 30, 2014, and services that support vulnerable families are at risk of ending unless Congress acts to continue the program. Participating families, states and communities need certainty as soon as possible to plan for the continuation of services and to assure that the resources invested to date are not abandoned.

Congress is reportedly finalizing details now on a large bill to address what is known as the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) which is connected to physician payment rates. AMCHP is working with a broad coalition of key stakeholders to support the MIECHV program, and our understanding is Congress could include reauthorizations for home visiting and other critical program known as “health extenders” with a final SGR bill if and only if they hear strong support now from their states. Therefore, we strongly urge those who are able to make contact on March 12, and appreciate you making calls to both of your Senators and U.S. representative. If needed, you can find out who represents you in Congress [here](#), and any questions or feedback from your calls can be directed to AMCHP Director of Policy Brent Ewig at bewig@amchp.org or 202-266-3041.