June 6, 2013

Dear Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Moran, Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As organizations dedicated to improving the health of all women, children, and families, we strongly urge you to support at least $640 million for the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant in the fiscal year 2014 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriation bill. This funding request represents a $90 million decrease from its highest level of $730 million in fiscal year 2003. Nondefense discretionary programs cannot continue to bear the brunt of efforts to reduce the federal deficit. Specifically, sequestration combined with reductions throughout the past ten years resulted in a $126 million decrease bringing funding for the Title V MCH Block Grant to its lowest level since 1991. Further reductions to the Title V MCH Block Grant will dramatically impact the health of women, infants and children including those with special health care needs. These vulnerable populations have already been affected by federal, state and local budget cuts. The undersigned organizations call upon Congress to sustain funding for this program.

In 2011 the Title V MCH Block Grant provided support and services to 44 million American women, infants and children, including children with special health care needs. It has been proven a cost effective, accountable, and flexible funding source used to address the most critical, pressing and unique MCH needs of each state. States and jurisdictions use the Title V MCH Block Grant to design and implement a wide range of maternal and child health programs. Although specific initiatives may vary among the states and jurisdictions, all of them work with local, state, and national partners to accomplish the following:

- Reduce infant mortality and incidence of disabling conditions among children;
- Increase the number of children appropriately immunized against disease;
- Increase the number of children in low-income households who receive assessments and follow-up diagnostic and treatment services;
- Provide and ensure access to comprehensive perinatal care for women; preventative and child care services; comprehensive care, including long-term care services, for children...
with special health care needs; and rehabilitation services for blind and disabled children
and
- Facilitate the development of comprehensive, family-centered, community-based, culturally competent, coordinated systems of care for children with special health care needs.

In addition to providing services to over 40 million Americans, Title V MCH Block Grant programs save federal and state governments’ money by ensuring that people receive preventive services to avoid more costly chronic conditions later in life. Accordingly, we must preserve this historic program and urge you to fund the Title V MCH Block Grant at $640 million. For additional information on MCH programs in your state please contact Carolyn Mullen at the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs at 202-266-3045 or cmullen@amchp.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Academic Pediatric Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Pediatric Society
American Nurses Association
American Public Health Association
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Asian Women for Health
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of State & Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors
Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
California Health Collaborative - Central San Joaquin Valley - Sierra Nevada Region
Centering Healthcare Institute
Children’s Defense Fund
Children's Dental Health Project
CityMatCH
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Action Partnership
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
Futures Without Violence
Genetic Alliance
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Healthy Teen Network
Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition
March of Dimes
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems
National Head Start Association
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National WIC Association
National Healthy Start Association
National Women's Law Center
Nurse-Family Partnership
Parents as Teachers National Center
Preeclampsia Foundation
Prevent Blindness America
Red Circle Wellness
RESULTS
Safe States Alliance
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Women's Health Research
The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
Voices for America's Children