

FRIENDS OF MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH
c/o Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
2030 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036 Tel: 202-775-0436

Dear Member of Congress:

As you prepare to finalize the fiscal year 2013 budget, we urge you to act to avoid sequestration, currently scheduled to take effect on Jan. 2, 2013, in a way that fully protects the health of women, children and their families. The 56 undersigned organizations, dedicated to improving the health of women, children and their families, agree fully with the many members of Congress from both parties who have expressed their opinion that sequestration would be devastating to the nation. We strongly urge a **balanced approach to deficit reduction that does not include further cuts to non-defense discretionary programs**; these critically important programs have already done their part to reduce the deficit.

It is in the best interest of our nation to ensure that children are born healthy and have the opportunity to grow up and lead productive lives. Healthy Americans are stronger on the battlefield, have higher academic achievement and are more productive on the job. Ensuring that every child is given a healthy start in life is imperative to achieving our goal of a thriving, safe and healthy country.

Sequestration would eliminate nearly **one billion dollars** in federal funding for research and programs designed to promote and protect the health of women and children – jeopardizing the progress we have made in addressing many of the most serious health and medical challenges facing our country – including infant mortality, preterm birth, injuries and childhood obesity. Specific examples illustrating the impact of sequestration are the following:

- More than 750,000 mothers and infants will be cut from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women and Children (WIC).
- Public health education about sudden infant death syndrome prevention, preconception care, STDs and family planning, access to oral health care, breast feeding, childhood obesity and linking families to services will be slashed
- States will lose capacity to address the leading causes of birth defects, as well as maternal and child deaths, and will be unable to support regionalized systems of care for medically fragile newborns
- Life-saving immunizations would be denied to 30,000 children and 20,000 adults. The nation will risk a resurgence of deadly threats that have been virtually eliminated in the United States, including measles and whooping cough
- Research on costly diseases and conditions affecting women and children would be significantly cut at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- Access to pediatricians and pediatric subspecialists will be threatened as fewer training slots would be available through the Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education program

Sequestration would devastate our public health system, impeding our ability to cure diseases and ensure that children are born healthy and go on to lead productive lives. We strongly urge

you to **work together to find a balanced approach to deficit reduction that does not target non-defense discretionary programs for any additional cuts.**

Sincerely,

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 Nurses Association
American Pediatric Society
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
Association of Immunization Managers
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of Public Health Nurses
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
Beckett Family Consulting
Children's Dental Health Project
Children's Hospital Association
CityMatCH
Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning
Coalition for Health Funding
Easter Seals
Family Voices
First Candle/SIDS Alliance
Genetic Alliance
Global Alliance to Prevent Prematurity and Stillbirth
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Officials
National Birth Defects Prevention Network
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Fragile X Foundation
National Healthy Start Association

National Partnership for Women & Families
National WIC Association
National Women's Health Network
Nurse Family Partnership
March of Dimes
Preeclampsia Foundation
Prevent Child Abuse America
RESULTS: The Power to End Poverty
Safe States Alliance
Shape Up America!
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Women's Health Research
The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
Trisomy 18 Foundation