

April 26, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Ranking Member Blunt, Chair DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole:

As you develop the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), **we urge you to provide \$100 million for the Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies Network (SET-NET) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**. This funding would enable SET-NET to scale nationally and serve as the nationwide preparedness and response network the United States needs to protect pregnant individuals and infants from emerging and re-emerging public health threats. Further, we recommend that you include the following bill report language:

Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies Network. — The committee includes \$100,000,000 to expand CDC’s Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mother and Babies Network (SET-NET)’s funded entities to all U.S. States, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and tribal entities. The program supports CDC’s collaboration with State, tribal, territorial, and local health departments to monitor the impact of emerging health threats, including COVID-19, on pregnant people and their babies and inform public health and clinical decision-making to improve the health of pregnant people and infants.

The United States continues to grapple with ongoing public health emergencies that put our most vulnerable populations, including pregnant individuals and infants, at risk. SET-NET is an innovative data collection system that links maternal exposures during pregnancy to health outcomes for babies. Building on a mom-baby linked data collection approach developed in response to the Zika outbreak, SET-NET leverages existing data sources to enable CDC and health departments to detect the impact of new and emerging health threats on pregnant individuals and their babies. Findings from SET-NET help parents, health care providers, public

health professionals, and policymakers take action to save lives, reduce risk, and improve the health of pregnant individuals and infants.

In FY22, SET-NET provided support to 31 state, local, and territorial health departments to monitor the impact on pregnant individuals and their babies of exposure to Zika, syphilis, hepatitis C, or COVID-19. With sufficient funding, SET-NET could expand to support 64 state, local, and territorial health departments as they collect, analyze, and report data on additional existing and emerging infectious disease threats to pregnant individuals and their babies and broaden the scope of SET-NET to examine environmental hazards like lead or perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). A truly national SET-NET would increase the racial, ethnic, geographic, and socioeconomic diversity of data available on the impacts on women, infants, and children of exposures during pregnancy. With additional resources, SET-NET could also support academic institutions and clinical networks to conduct mother-baby longitudinal cohort studies to examine the risks, benefits, and adoption of prevention and treatment strategies for specific health threats.

As a result of the public health data infrastructure built by SET-NET, and with some emergency COVID funding, funded sites were able to rapidly adapt their surveillance systems to collect data to answer questions about the health effects of COVID-19 exposure on pregnant individuals and their babies. Published findings from SET-NET data in 2020 showed that pregnant people with COVID-19 may be at increased risk of having a preterm infant compared to pregnant people without COVID-19. Later published findings of SET-NET data in 2021 identified risk factors for pregnant individuals who may experience more severe illness. These findings underscored the need for infection prevention and supported a recommendation of vaccination during pregnancy. Moving forward, it is critical that Congress continue to invest in SET-NET entities to support rapid data collection and a deeper understanding of impact of COVID-19 infection during pregnancy.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to provide **\$100 million for SET-NET in FY23** to fully fund our national preparedness and response network focused on pregnant individuals and infants. Investing in this sustainable framework for rapid, evidence-based data collection can ensure that the United States is prepared to meet the unique needs of pregnant individuals and infants in response to a wide range of public health threats.

Sincerely,

2020 Mom
AFE Foundation
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families
Alliance for Black NICU Families
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

American Medical Women's Association
American Public Health Association
APS Foundation of America, Inc
Association of Public Health Laboratories
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Autism Society of America
Centering Healthcare Institute
Children's Environmental Health Network
Children's Hospital Association
Community Catalyst
Equitable Maternal Health Coalition
Every Mother Counts
Families USA
Family Voices
FASD United (Formerly NOFAS)
First Focus Campaign for Children
GLO Premies
Hand to Hold
Healthy Teen Network
Lamaze International
March for Moms
March of Dimes
Mom Congress
MomsRising
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Birth Defects Prevention Network
National Birth Equity Collaborative
National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network, Inc.
Organization of Teratology Information Specialists
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Postpartum Support International
PremieWorld, LLC
RESULTS
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Reproductive Investigation
Spina Bifida Association
Tara Hansen Foundation
The 2 Degrees Foundation
The HOPE Study
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The PPROM Foundation
The Shane Foundation
Vaccinate Your Family