



JUNE 16, 2009

THE HONORABLE EDWARD M. KENNEDY
CHAIRMAN, HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR & PENSIONS COMMITTEE
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THE HONORABLE MICHAEL ENZI
RANKING MEMBER, HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR & PENSIONS COMMITTEE
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DEAR CHAIRMAN KENNEDY AND SENATOR ENZI:

ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH PROGRAMS (AMCHP), I AM PLEASED TO OFFER OUR SUPPORT OF THE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CHOICES ACT AND OUR GRATITUDE FOR THE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE ACT. WE ARE ESPECIALLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE EMPHASIS ON PUBLIC HEALTH, PREVENTION AND WELLNESS, AND COMMEND THE PROVISIONS PROPOSED IN TITLE III, "IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE."

THIS LEGISLATION DEMONSTRATES THAT HEALTH REFORM CANNOT SOLELY ADDRESS ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE WHICH IS FUNDAMENTAL BUT INSUFFICIENT TO IMPROVE HEALTH. INSTEAD YOUR PROPOSAL RECOGNIZES THAT TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALL AMERICANS WE NEED TO INVEST IN THE PREVENTION OF DISEASE AND DISABILITY. WE PARTICULARLY OFFER OUR STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED PREVENTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH INVESTMENT FUND, WHICH WILL MAKE REMARKABLE STRIDES IN SHIFTING OUR HEALTH SYSTEM FROM TREATMENT TOWARDS PREVENTION.

STATE MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH) PROGRAMS HAVE IDENTIFIED GROWING NEEDS IN AREAS SUCH AS PRE-TERM BIRTH, INFANT MORTALITY AND RELATED DISPARITIES, CHILDHOOD OBESITY, INJURY PREVENTION, PRECONCEPTION HEALTH, AND DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS FOR MANY YEARS. WHILE THE NEEDS AMERICA'S WOMEN, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ARE CLEAR THE RESOURCES TO ADDRESS THESE NEEDS HAVE BEEN ERODED IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS. WE VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES TO ASSURE THAT THE PROPOSED FUND REVERSES THIS TREND AND BENEFITS MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH POPULATIONS CURRENTLY SERVED BY ALL STATE MCH PROGRAMS.





ASSOCIATION OF MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH PROGRAMS

OUR NATION RANKS 29TH IN INFANT MORTALITY RATES AMONG ALL INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS AND HAS NOT MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN THE LAST DECADE. EVEN MORE DISTURBING, INFANT MORTALITY AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN BABIES IS DOUBLE, AND IN SOME PLACES TRIPLE, THE RATE FOR WHITES. DESPITE DECADES OF WORK TO EXPAND INSURANCE COVERAGE AND EARLY ACCESS TO PRENATAL CARE, AMERICA'S PRETERM BIRTH RATE HAS RISEN

DRAMATICALLY AND PROGRESS IN REDUCING INFANT MORTALITY HAS STALLED. WE CAN AND MUST DO BETTER. HEALTH REFORM OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW PROGRESS ON VITAL MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH OUTCOMES SUCH AS INFANT MORTALITY. THANK YOU FOR THE LEADERSHIP YOU ARE PROVIDING ON THESE ISSUES.

SINCERELY,

Michael R. Fraser, PhD
Chief Executive Officer

