

September 15, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairwoman Collins, Vice Chair Murray, Chair Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin,
Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Chair Aderholt:

As organizations committed to improving maternal and infant health, strengthening families, and advancing healthy child development, **we write to urge you to reject the elimination of funding for the Healthy Start program in the House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill and to provide no less than \$145.25 million for Healthy Start in FY2027.**

The House Committee on Appropriations eliminated funding for Healthy Start based on the mistaken assertion that it duplicates the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program. That conclusion is inaccurate. Although both programs support pregnant women and families with young children, they were designed for different purposes, serve communities in different ways, and together comprise complementary components of our nation's maternal and infant health infrastructure. Eliminating Healthy Start would leave significant gaps in services for communities experiencing the highest rates of maternal and infant mortality.

The need for Healthy Start has never been greater. The United States continues to experience unacceptably high rates of maternal and infant mortality across the country. Healthy Start serves communities with 1.5 times the national infant mortality rate. Still, there are many under-resourced communities where infants are twice as likely to die before their first birthday, and mothers continue to face substantially higher risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes. In addition, families living in communities with high poverty rates, limited access to maternity care, and other structural barriers continue to experience the greatest burden of poor birth outcomes.

For more than three decades, Healthy Start has enjoyed bipartisan support and served as the federal government's flagship community-driven initiative focused on reducing infant mortality and improving birth outcomes in communities with the greatest need. Through federally funded community-based organizations, Healthy Start provides comprehensive services that support families from pregnancy through the postpartum period and early infancy while addressing the underlying social and economic factors that influence health.

Unlike many traditional healthcare programs, Healthy Start is community driven. Local organizations work alongside residents to identify priorities, develop solutions, and build systems of care that reflect the strengths, cultures, and needs of the communities they serve. Programs coordinate clinical care with services that address food insecurity, housing instability, transportation, behavioral health, father engagement, breastfeeding support, doula services, care coordination, and other social drivers of health. Healthy Start also develops trusted community-based workforces by employing community health workers, peer support specialists, and other professionals whose personal experiences strengthen relationships with families and improves engagement in care.

Healthy Start has consistently demonstrated strong outcomes for participating families. The program increases timely prenatal care, promotes well-child visits and safe sleep practices, screens for maternal depression, strengthens father and partner involvement, and connects families to ongoing healthcare and community resources. These outcomes contribute to healthier pregnancies, healthier infants, and stronger families while helping reduce costly adverse birth outcomes.

Healthy Start is not interchangeable with MIECHV. The two programs were intentionally designed to accomplish different objectives. MIECHV provides formula funding to states to implement evidence-based home visiting models selected by each state. Healthy Start, by contrast, provides direct federal funding to community-driven organizations in communities experiencing disproportionately high rates of infant mortality. Healthy Start employs a place-based approach that integrates clinical care, community engagement, systems coordination, workforce development, fatherhood programming, and services addressing social drivers of health. While some Healthy Start projects include home visiting among their array of services, home visiting is only one component of a much broader community-based model. Many MIECHV-funded home visiting models focus primarily on early childhood development and family support extending up through the first five years of a child's life, whereas Healthy Start concentrates on improving outcomes during pregnancy, birth, the postpartum period, and infancy while strengthening local systems of care.

These distinctions are intentional. Congress has long recognized that improving maternal and infant health requires multiple evidence-based and informed strategies that work together to meet families where they are.

At a time when maternity care deserts are expanding, community-based maternal health providers face growing financial pressures, and differences in maternal and infant health outcomes remain unacceptable, Congress should strengthen, not eliminate, Healthy Start. **We respectfully urge you to provide no less than \$145.25 million for the program in the final FY2027 Labor-HHS appropriations bill.** If we can provide further information or otherwise be of assistance, please contact Deborah Frazier, Chief Executive Officer, National Healthy Start Association (dfrazier@nationalhealthystart.org, 202-296-2195).

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

National Healthy Start Association
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
2 Degrees Foundation
2 The People
A'sani Heartbeat foundation
AAUW
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
African American Mayors Association
AJO Consulting Services, LLC
Allen & Birch Community Health Center
Alliance for Black NICU Families
America's Essential Hospitals
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Pediatrics, CA Chapter 3
American Association of Birth Centers
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics
American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association Services, Inc.
American Public Health Association
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
APS Foundation of America, Inc
Arbor Circle
Arms of Recovery
Art Tatum Zone
ASCENSION ST. VINCENT'S HEALTHCARE

Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
Association of Public Health Nurses
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Association of Women's Health Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Athens Home Care Solutions, LLC
Athens Parent Wellbeing
Authority health
Azalea Rose Project
Baby Cafe USA
Baltimore Healthy Start
BCFS Health and Human Services
Before&After Holistic Childbirth Services
Birth Local Midwifery
Birthing With Joy Health and Wellness
BirthRoot Community Doula
Black Health Equity Alliance
Black Midwifery Collective
BMMA, Inc. (Black Mamas Matter Alliance)
BMS WIC Program
BRBAC Metro Health
BreastfeedLA
CAANH
California Environmental Voters
CAMBA Inc.
Care Ring
CASA of Los Angeles
Catering 2 UR Soul
Center for Black Women's Wellness
Centering Healthcare Institute
Central Mississippi Civic Improvement Association, Inc. d/b/a Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center
Champions for Children
Changent (Nurse-Family Partnership & Child First)
Changing River Consulting, LLC
Cherry Health
Cherry Root Hustle & Healing, LLC
Children's Advocacy Alliance of Nevada
Children's Funding Project
Children's Hospital Association
Children's Wisconsin
Choices In Wellness
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC)
City of Baker Council
City of New Haven
Claris Health

Clayton Collaborative Authority
Clover NOLA
Coalition on Human Needs
Columbus Public Health
Community Alliance for Research and Engagement
Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
Community Health Center of Richmond, Inc.
Compassus MIHP
Concord Therapy LLC
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Region
Conley Johnson Counseling LLC
Consulting Solutions, LLC
Corewell Health
Crescent City Family Services
Cuyahoga County Invest in Children
DavidJo, LLC
dbGenesis Productions, LLC
Dee Hill Foundation Inc
Denver Health
Department of Psychiatry, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, SUNY Upstate Medical Center
Diamond Mental Health & Wellness, PLLC
Disciples Center for Public Witness (Disciples of Christ)
Diversity Uplifts, Inc.
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC)
Doddridge County Family Resource Network
Dr. Mom Baby | Align Wellness Center
Dynamic Dyad
Eastern Michigan University Center for Health Disparities Innovations and Studies
Eclectic DC
El Nido Family Centers, EHS
Elephant Circle
Enlighten Doula Services
EverThrive Illinois
Every Mother Counts
EveryStep Care and Support Services
Families Forward Resource Center
Families USA
Family Bridge Inc.
Family Foundations Early Head Start
Family Planning Services of Lorain County
Family Road of Greater Baton Rouge
Family Support Services- Center of Hope
Family Values @ Work
Family Voices National
Father Movement, Inc.

Fathers On A Mission (FOAM)
Fayton Foundation
First Candle
First Focus Campaign for Children
First Up
Five Rivers Healthy Start - Dayton
Flushing Hospital Medical Center
Fund for Public Health in New York City
Futures Without Violence
GENESEE HEALTH PLAN
GLO Preemies
Global Communities
Global Communities Healthy Start
Global Perinatal Services
Gordon Family Foundation
Great Ideas Consulting
Great Start Foundation Inc
Greater Baton Rouge Black Nurses Association
Habitus Co-Op
Hackley Community Care
Harrison County WIC
Haven's Harvest
Hawai'i Perinatal Research, Equity, and Systems Collaborative
Health, Education, and Legal Assistance Project: A Medical-Legal Partnership
Healthcare Consultants, LLC
HealthConnect One
Healthier Moms and Babies
Healthy Babies Healthy Start
Healthy Birth Day, Inc.
Healthy Families America
Healthy Kent Infant Health Action Team
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies- The Montana Coalition, Inc
Healthy Start at Start Corp
Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade
Healthy Start Community Coalition of Okaloosa and Walton Counties
Healthy Start with Southside Medical Clinical
Healthy Start, Inc. Pittsburgh
HealthyWomen
Heart of Georgia Healthy Start Coalition
Helping Hands Training & Consultation Services
Helpmyneighborr LLC
Hopeful Beginnings
Hurley Medical Center
I AM MS Inc.
Imagine U
Institute for Perinatal Quality Improvement (PQI)

Integrative Medicine for the Underserved
 Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc.
 Involved Dad
 Iowa Chapter of NAPAP
 Iris Domestic Violence Center
 Ivy Closet
 Jamaica Hospital Medical Center
 JHM Consulting, LLC
 JIREH Providers
 Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.
 LeadHERWell Village
 League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
 League of Women Voters Metropolitan Des Moines
 Lee Health
 Life Space Hope & Wellness Center
 Life Tree Women Care
 Lifeline for Families Center and Lifeline for Moms Program at UMass Chan Medical School
 Liminality Consulting
 Little Dreamers Early Learning Center
 Lorain County Public Health
 LuVpEaCeNsOuL MoVeMeNt
 MA AWHONN
 March of Dimes
 Martin's Village Doula Services
 Mary Wade Healthcare Inc
 Maternal and Child Health-ICHHD
 Maternal Matters Favored, Inc.
 Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
 Maternity Care Coalition
 Memor Health
 Metro Council District 10, City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge
 Michigan affiliate of ACNM
 Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance (MiCHWA)
 Michigan State University Charles Stewart Mott Department of Public Health
 Mighty Little Giants
 Missouri Bootheel Regional Consortium, Inc.
 Mocha Moms, Inc.
 Modern Woodmen of America
 Momentum Counseling and Consultation. LLC..
 MomsFirst Fatherhood Program
 Monarch Legacy LLC
 My Mommy My Baby
 NAACP
 NACPM
 National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
 National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
 National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
 National Birth Equity Collaborative
 National Black Nurses Association
 National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network, Inc.
 National Collaborative for Health Equity
 National Diaper Bank Network
 National Institute for Children's Health Quality
 National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice
 National League for Nursing
 National Network of Public Health Institutes
 National Parent Leadership Institute
 National Partnership for Women & Families
 National PLACE
 National Respite Coalition
 Nazarene Housing Outreach
 NC Public Health Association
 NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
 NeverEndingFood Permaculture Trust
 New Haven Healthy Start
 New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
 Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition
 Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition Fatherhood PRIDE
 Nurture KC
 Nurturely
 NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene
 Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLHSA)
 Oluwatosin Consulting LLC
 Once Upon A Preemie, Inc.
 One Hope Covenant Church
 Operation Safe Birth Inc.
 Oregon Health & Science University
 Oshun Family Center
 Parents as Teachers National Center
 Passages-Connecting Fathers and Families
 PATCH Coalition of Taylor County
 PCOS Challenge: The National Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Association
 Pee Dee Healthy Start Inc
 Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children
 Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
 Perigee Fund
 Perinatal CARE Program, University of Miami
 Perinatal Support Washington
 Pittsburgh Bereavement Doulas
 Postpartum Support International
 Postpartum Support International - Indiana Chapter

Postpartum Support International Delaware
Postpartum Support International Pennsylvania Chapter
Postpartum Support International- Iowa
Postpartum Support International, WV Chapter
Power to Decide
PREACH
Preeclampsia Foundation
PREEMIEWORLD FOUNDATION INC
Prepared to Prosper, LLC
Prevent Blindness
Prevent Child Abuse Illinois
Primo Center for Women and Children
PSI- IL Chapter
Public Health Solutions - PICHHC
Queen City Majority Action Fund
Raising Illinois Prenatal-to-Three Coalition
Raising Resilience Consulting
Randolph County Family Resource Network
Reach Out and Read
Reaching Sisters Everywhere, Inc
REACHUP, Inc.
Reproductive Freedom for All
ResourceFull Consulting
Richard G. Lugar Center for Rural Health
RiseForward360
Root and Soul Acupuncture Inc
Rooted in Wisdom
Sacramento Maternal Mental Health Collaborative
San Bernardino Fatherhood
San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition
San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative
Saul's Light Foundation
Selah's red tent
SGA Youth and Family Services, NFP
SHIELDS for Families
Single Family Living
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Public Health Education
Society for Reproductive Investigation
Sol-Moon Sovereignty
South Carolina Office of Rural Health/Family Solutions
Southeast Michigan IBCLC's of Color
Southern Nevada Health District
Southside Medical Center
Spina Bifida Association
Stewart Consulting LLC

Strong Beginnings - Healthy Start
Subliminal Dreamz Inc
Susan Lowe Counseling
Tagata Moana Hui Foundation
The Arc Michigan
The Center for Men's Excellence
The Children's Home Society of New Jersey
The Cooperative
The Emmanuel Brand
The Family Tree Information, Education & Counseling Center
The Foundation for Delaware County
The Foundation for Delaware County (Family Village)
The Gift of Life Foundation
The Her Promise Circle Foundation
The Jacksonville Urban League
The Jasmine Project Program
The Kenzy Touch, LLC.
The Middleburg Institute
The Midwife Center
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The National Nurse-Led Care Consortium
The Nurtured Nest: Trauma Sensitive Doula Care, LLC
The Parents' Place of MD
The PPRM Foundation
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
The Univeristy of Miami Jasmine Project
The Vibrant Mama Method
The Women and Girls Foundation
The Women's Fund Miami-Dade
Toledo Lucas County Health Department
Trending Joy Counseling and Therapy PLLC
Trying Together
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee
Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Westport
University of Miami Jasmine Project
USCRI STARS DETROIT
Utah Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (UTAAP)
Valor Family Connections, LLC.
Voices for Utah Children
Washington State Public Health Association
Well Mind Perinatal
Wellness Services Inc.
Western PA Lactation Consultants Association
Women Advancing Nutrition Dietetics and Agriculture
Women Against Abusive Relationships (WAAR)
Women for a Healthy Environment

WV Healthy Start
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center - Family, Community & Beyond Program
WZA Consultant
Yale New Haven Hospital
Yale University
YEAH! YOGA
Youth Oasis
ZERO TO THREE