

June 9, 2023

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the undersigned 79 organizations, we write express our strong support for the PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2023 (S.1573/H.R.3226), vital legislation to reauthorize and expand research, education and intervention activities related to preterm birth. It was introduced on May 11, 2023 by Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO), Sen. John Boozman (R-AR), Rep. Michael Burgess (R-TX), Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA), Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL), Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE) and Rep. Jen Kiggans (R-VA).

U.S. preterm birth rate has steadily increased since 2014 to 10.5% in 2021, with a significant 4% increase in just one year and the highest recorded rate since 2007. This represents an increase to 383,082 preterm births. Black and Native American women are 62% more likely to have a preterm birth and their babies are twice as likely to die as compared to White women. Preterm birth also accounts for 35.8% of infant deaths in the U.S. and the annual societal economic cost (medical, education, and lost productivity) is an estimated \$25.2 billion.

Although there are some clinical predictors of preterm birth, all pregnant individuals are at risk for preterm birth. Infants born prematurely have increased risks of morbidity and death throughout childhood, especially during the first year of life. Long-term health impacts include intellectual and developmental delays, behavioral problems, neurological disorders, visual and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, and respiratory insufficiency or intestinal insufficiency.¹

While many risk factors associated with preterm birth have been identified, the “biological basis for many of these risk factors and the underlying mechanisms remain poorly understood.”² This is particularly true for social and structural disparities. The PREEMIE Act will help reduce preterm birth, prevent newborn death and disability caused by preterm birth, expand research into the causes of preterm birth, and promote the development, availability, and uses of evidence-based standards of care for pregnant women.

Among the programs authorized by the PREEMIE Act is CDC’s highly successful Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS). PRAMS collects site-specific, population-based data tracking maternal attitudes and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy on 81% of births and is used by researchers and state, territory, and local governments to plan and review programs and policies aimed at reducing health problems among mothers and infants. This legislation will also provide for a new study on the costs, impact of non-medical factors, gaps in public health programs that lead to prematurity, and calls for recommendations to prevent preterm birth.

We look forward to working with you this year to advance this critical legislation. For more information, please contact Andrew Fullerton, Deputy Director of Federal Affairs, at afullerton@marchofdimes.org.

¹ Prediction and prevention of spontaneous preterm birth. ACOG Practice Bulletin No. 234. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. *Obstet Gynecol* 2021;138:e65–90.

² Rubens C, Sadovsky Y, LMuglia L, et al. Prevention of preterm birth: Harnessing science to address the global epidemic. *Science Translational Medicine*. 2014; 6(262):262sr5. doi: 10.1126/scitranslmed.3009871.

Sincerely,

AIDS Action Baltimore
AIDS Foundation Chicago
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology & Strabismus
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association on Health and Disability
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Public Health Association
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
Arnold Solutions 53, Incorporated
Association of Black Cardiologists
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association
Blue Skies Consultation
Calming Nature Doula Service & Center
CARES Foundation Inc.
CDH International
Cerebral Palsy Foundation
Child Neurology Foundation
Children's Hospital Association
dsm firmenich North America
Educare Learning Network
Endocrine Society
Erie Niagara Area Health Education Center
Etana Tax and Accounting LLC
Families USA
Family Voices
Family Voices NJ
First Focus Campaign for Children
Futures Without Violence
Galactosemia Foundation
Genetic Alliance
Global Down Syndrome Foundation
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America
Health Equity Solutions
Healthy Birth Day, Inc.
Impetus - Let's Get Started LLC
Ipas
Jericho Road Community Health Center
John Burton Advocates for Youth
Kaleida Health Family Planning
Lakeshore Foundation

March for Moms
March of Dimes
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health
MTS Sickle Cell Foundation, Inc.
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National CMV Foundation
National Health Law Program
National League for Nursing
National Partnership for Women & Families
National WIC Association
National Women's Health Network
Necrotizing Enterocolitis (NEC) Society
Nemours Children's Health
North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition
Preeclampsia Foundation
Prevent Blindness
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
PUSH for Empowered Pregnancy
RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association
Rhia Ventures
Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc.
Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.- Lambda Epsilon Chapter
Sigma Gamma Rho, Alpha Phi Sigma Chapter Pretty Poodles
Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network
Spina Bifida Association
STChealth
SWCyril Holdings Inc
Tennessee Health Care Campaign
The Collaborative
The Fibroid Foundation
U.S. Breastfeeding Committee
Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity (URGE)
United Way of Buffalo & Erie County