



September 13, 2021

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
House Energy & Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone:

On behalf of March of Dimes, the nation's leading nonprofit organization fighting for the health of all moms and babies, I write to express our strong support for the Energy & Commerce Committee's *Build Back Better Act* that will make considerable improvements in health care for our nation's mothers, children, and families.

We commend you for including policies that will close the Medicaid coverage gap guaranteeing people in all states have access to affordable coverage and to the full range of health care benefits, including necessary and preventive health care services. Closing the coverage gap is critical not only for better maternal health, but also to achieve broader health equity. We also applaud you for extending the expanded Advanced Premium Tax Credit (APTC) through 2024. In addition, the legislation would take important steps in securing coverage for children by providing for 12 months continuous coverage eligibility under Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The legislation would also take the very important step of making CHIP permanent removing the potential for lapses in authorization that threaten the program's stability and children's continued access to coverage.

Most notably, the legislation extends the provision, originally authorized in the *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021*, requiring full benefits for eligible pregnant and postpartum women for up to one year under Medicaid. In addition, this language would make this extension permanent. The legislation also provides 12 months of postpartum coverage to women enrolled in CHIP. This has been a top legislative priority for March of Dimes and we thank the Committee for including these long overdue policy changes which will ensure every woman gets the coverage she needs to stay healthy after their babies are born.

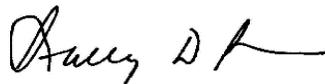
The Committee has also shown its strong commitment to improving maternal health, specifically for Black and Indigenous people by including a historic investment of over \$1 billion for the *Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act* to save moms' lives, end racial and ethnic maternal health disparities, and advance birth equity. March of Dimes has been a leading advocate of the Momnibus Act and we are pleased the Build Back Better Act includes significant investments from the following Momnibus sections we strongly support:

- Social Determinants for Moms Act;
- Kira Johnson Act;
- Perinatal Workforce Act;
- Moms Matter Act;
- Protecting Moms and Babies Against Climate Change Act;

- Data to Save Moms Act;
- Maternal Health Pandemic Response Act; and
- Tech to Save Moms Act.

March of Dimes thanks you for your leadership in addressing our nation's pressing maternal and child health care challenges in the Build Back Better Act. We look to working with you to ensure that pregnant women, new mothers and children continue to be a top priority as the budget reconciliation package advances. Please direct any follow-up questions to KJ Hertz, Senior Director, Federal Affairs (khertz@marchofdimes.org, 571.969.8655).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stacey D. Stewart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Stacey D. Stewart
President & CEO

Cc:
Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Ron Wyden