

February 10, 2017

Senator Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128, US Capitol  
Washington DC 20510

Senator Pat Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-146A, US Capitol  
Washington DC 20510

Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-305, US Capitol  
Washington DC 20515

Representative Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey,

On behalf of our organizations representing patients, health care providers, public health, and businesses, we urge you to include ample funding to combat the Zika virus in the Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations bills.

Zika virus continues to pose a major threat to the health and well-being of our nation's pregnant women and infants. While transmission rates are low here during winter in the northern hemisphere, Zika is expected to resurge when mosquitos emerge this spring. Local transmission is still occurring in the Southern part of the country, most notably in Texas, where a pregnant woman was recently infected. Additionally, Americans continue to travel to areas with active local transmission, such as the Caribbean, where they may become infected. And while federal funding has allowed for tremendous progress on a Zika vaccine, it is still at least two years away from being widely available.

The Continuing Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017, and Zika Response and Preparedness Act took vital steps to provide resources to prevent, diagnose and treat cases of Zika virus infection and its health consequences. These funds are making possible rapid progress toward a vaccine, critical studies on the natural history of Zika and its health effects, and preparations for more effective vector control this summer. However, this single infusion of funds will not be sufficient to sustain the long-term effort needed to combat Zika.

Fighting Zika effectively will require a multi-faceted approach. The National Institutes of Health needs continued funding to develop Zika vaccines and to study the disease. The Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention must have funding to conduct and improve Zika diagnostics and to support state prevention efforts, including vector control. State, local and tribal governments must have appropriate resources for their work, including enhanced laboratory, epidemiology and surveillance capacity, continued vector control, and public awareness and education campaigns. We look forward to working with you to ensure that each of these key strategies is funded appropriately.

Our organizations are currently working to develop more specific requests for Zika funding in Fiscal Year 2018, which we will convey to you in the coming weeks. In the meantime, if we can be of additional assistance, please contact Jaimie Vickery, Director of Federal Affairs at the March of Dimes, at 202-659-1800 or [jvickery@marchofdimes.org](mailto:jvickery@marchofdimes.org).

Sincerely,

AABB  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Clinical Chemistry  
American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Reproductive Medicine  
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Public Health Laboratories  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Black Women's Health Imperative  
Children's Environmental Health Network  
Commissioned Officers Association of the US. Public Health Service, Inc.  
Cooley's Anemia Foundation  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
Family Voices  
GBS|CIDP Foundation International  
Genetic Alliance  
Grifols  
Healthcare Ready  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
March of Dimes  
National Association of County and City Health Officials  
National Birth Defects Prevention Network  
National Environmental Health Association  
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Organization for Rare Disorders  
Novavax  
OraSure Technologies  
Public Health Institute  
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition

Research!America

RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Spina Bifida Association

Teratology Society

The Arc of the United States

The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America

Trisomy 18 Foundation

Trust for America's Health