

March xx, 2026

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20210

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20210

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

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, Chair Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

As you develop the fiscal year (FY) 2027 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill, **we urge you to provide \$100 million for the Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies (SET-NET)** at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This funding would enable SET-NET to reach additional jurisdictions, track more threats, and lead the nationwide preparedness and response needed to protect pregnant women and infants in the United States from emerging and re-emerging public health threats. Further, we recommend that you include the following bill report language:

Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies — The committee includes \$100,000,000 to expand CDC's Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mother and Babies funded entities to additional threats and additional U.S. States, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and tribal entities. The program supports CDC's collaboration with State, tribal, territorial, and local health departments to monitor the impact of emerging health threats on pregnant women and their babies and inform public health and clinical decision-making to improve the health of pregnant people and infants.

The United States continues to grapple with ongoing public health emergencies (PHEs) – from local PHEs as a result of severe storms and flooding to the ongoing national opioid crisis PHE – that threaten the health of all, especially at-risk populations such as pregnant women and infants. Building on an innovative mom-baby linked data collection approach developed in response to the Zika outbreak, SET-NET leverages existing data sources to enable CDC and health departments to detect the impact of new and emerging health threats on pregnant women and

their babies. SET-NET helps families, health care providers, public health professionals, and policymakers take action to save lives, reduce risk, and improve the health of pregnant women and infants.

In FY 2025, SET-NET provided support to 26 state, local, and territorial health departments to monitor the impact of exposure to syphilis, hepatitis C, dengue, and congenital cytomegalovirus (cCMV) on pregnant women and their babies. With sufficient funding, SET-NET could expand to support up to 64 state, local, and territorial health departments develop or strengthen their capacity and infrastructure to collect, analyze, and report data on existing and emerging threats to pregnant women and their babies.

The public health data infrastructure and surveillance systems established under SET-NET have contributed data critical to public health responses to new and emerging threats, including:

- Identification of pregnancy as a risk factor for severe COVID-19 and that a COVID-19 infection during pregnancy increased the risk for preterm birth and stillbirth, underscoring the need for infection prevention and supporting a recommendation of vaccination during pregnancy;
- Identification of a link between substance use during pregnancy and infants born with congenital syphilis, highlighting the need for syphilis screening and treatment at every health encounter during pregnancy for those using substances; and
- Identification of missed opportunities to treat pregnant women with a hepatitis C virus infection prior to pregnancy, preventing transmission to the infant.

Investing in this sustainable framework for rapid, evidence-based data collection will ensure that the United States is prepared to meet the unique needs of pregnant women and infants during public health emergencies. Thank you for your consideration of this **request to provide \$100 million for the Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies program** to fully fund a national preparedness and response network focused preventing or reducing threats to pregnant women, mothers, and infants.

Sincerely,