

## **Pregnancy Assistance Fund Reauthorization Support Letter**

Dear Member of Congress:

The undersigned organizations express our support for the Pregnancy Assistance Fund (PAF) and urge Congress to reauthorize and appropriate funds to the program. This vital program directed to students who are pregnant and parenting and to pregnant women who have experienced sexual violence is currently funded at \$25 million annually and is set to expire September 30, 2019.

The Pregnancy Assistance Fund is a competitive grant program that funds States, Territories, and Tribal entities so they can provide a seamless network of support services to youth who are pregnant and parenting and/or pregnant women who experience sexual violence. PAF grantees subaward their moneys to institutions of higher education, high schools, community services centers, attorneys general, or a combination thereof. These subgrantees use their PAF funds to establish, maintain, or operate health, education support, and human services support services for students who are pregnant and parenting, improve services for pregnant women who have experienced sexual violence, and increase awareness concerning the services available to the program's beneficiaries.

Youth who are pregnant and parenting face many barriers to enrolling, attending, and succeeding in high school and college, such as discrimination, the challenge of juggling schoolwork with parenting, and a lack of access to health services and other concrete supports for themselves and their children. Failure to provide full supports to student parents so that they may complete their educations has severe short- and long-term consequences for the economic success and well-being of their families and communities, as well as our nation.

On the other hand, ensuring the success of students who are pregnant and parenting matters, not only for them but also for their children, who are more likely to thrive if their parents graduate. Participants in State and Tribal PAF projects have experienced positive outcomes including improvements in high school graduation, acceptance into Institutions of Higher Education, reductions in dropping out of high school, and reductions in subsequent unintended pregnancies. Compared to youth who are pregnant and parenting who did not receive services through the PAF program, program participants are more likely to graduate from high school (94% vs. 51%), less likely to drop out of high school (8% vs. 30%), and less likely to report a subsequent unintended pregnancy (6% vs. 20%).

In addition, pregnant women are at heightened risk of sexual violence. In response, some States and Tribal entities have elected to direct PAF grant funds to deliver intervention services (such as hotline services), accompaniment services (such as through court procedures), and supportive social services to these survivors of violence.

PAF is the only federal program targeted uniquely to youth who are pregnant and parenting. Also, the program fills services gaps that pregnant women harmed by sexual violence encounter. Over the ten-year life of PAF, 32 States and seven Tribal entities have provided critical supports to over 94,000 youth who are pregnant and parenting and pregnant women. PAF is helping States and Tribal entities better serve youth and women facing unique challenges. The program merits continuation.

Sincerely,

*Signers as of 06242020*

### **National Scope Organizations**

African American Juvenile Justice Project  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Sexual Health Association  
Ascend at the Aspen Institute  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Children's Home Society of America  
Fathers and Families Coalition of America  
Health 4 Hire, Inc.  
Healthy Schools Network  
Healthy Teen Network  
Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health  
March of Dimes  
National Center for Student Parent Programs  
National Crittenton  
National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
National Network for Youth  
National Organization for Women  
National Women's Political Caucus  
Nurse-Family Partnership  
Physicians for Reproductive Health  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Power to Decide  
Rights4Girls  
R Street Institute  
School-Based Health Alliance  
SchoolHouse Connection  
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)  
SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators  
Society for Public Health Education  
Upstream USA

**State, Tribal, and Local Scope Organizations** *(in order by state)*

Alaska Children's Trust (AK)  
University of Hawaii Bridge to Hope (HI)  
University of Hawaii Student Parents at Manoa (HI)  
Eyes Open Iowa (IA)  
Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies (LA)  
Baltimore City Health Department (MD)  
Family Services of the Merrimack Valley (MA)  
Roca, Inc. (MA)  
Berrien County Health Department (MI)  
Big Brothers Big Sisters Michigan Capital Region (MI)  
Child and Family Charities (MI)  
Eaton Regional Education Service Agency (MI)  
Gianna House (MI)  
Lansing School District (MI)  
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MI)  
Michigan League for Public Policy (MI)  
Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH) (MI)  
Stand with Trans (MI)  
Starfish Family Services (MI)  
Success Virtual Learning Centers of Michigan (MI)  
Teen Health Mississippi (MS)  
CSKT Healthy Young Parent Program (MT)  
BOND (Building Our Noncustodial Dads) (NC)  
Rosemary's Babies Co (OH)  
Successful Healthy Children (OH)  
J.A.M.E.S. Inc. (OK)  
Modus (OK)  
Oklahoma City County Health Department (OK)  
Strong Tomorrows (OK)  
Take Control Initiative (OK)  
Tulsa Health Department (OK)  
Chemeketa Community College (OR)  
Children First for Oregon (OR)  
Klamath Community College (OR)  
Squires (OR)  
Philadelphia Department of Health (PA)  
Planned Parenthood Keystone (PA)  
Women's Law Project (PA)  
West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation (RI)  
Florence Crittenton Programs of South Carolina (SC)  
Children's Trust of South Carolina (SC)  
Fact Forward (SC)  
Family Outreach of Horry County (SC)  
Middle Tyger Community Center (SC)  
Voices for Vermont's Children (VT)  
Virginia Department of Health's Stronger Parents Brighter Futures Program (VA)

Walworth County Educational Consortium Alternative High School (WI)

**Further Information**

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