

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 10, 2024

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20210

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education & Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Chair Baldwin and Ranking Member Capito:

As you develop the Fiscal Year 2025 Departments of 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 individuals and infants in the United States from emerging and re-emerging public health threats.

The United States continues to grapple with ongoing public health emergencies that put our most vulnerable populations, including pregnant individuals and infants, at risk. 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 individuals 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 individuals and infants.

In Fiscal Year 2024, SET-NET provided support to 29 state, local, and territorial health departments to monitor the impact of exposure to Zika, syphilis, hepatitis C, COVID-19, MPox, and congenital cytomegalovirus on pregnant individuals and their babies. With sufficient funding, SET-NET could expand to support up to 64 state, local, and territorial health departments as they collect, analyze, and report data on existing and emerging threats to pregnant individuals and their babies.

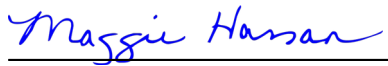
The public health data infrastructure and surveillance systems established under SET-NET have contributed data critical to public health responses to new and emerging threats, including:

- 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 individuals 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 individuals 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 in Fiscal Year 2025** to fully fund a national preparedness and response network focused on pregnant individuals and infants.

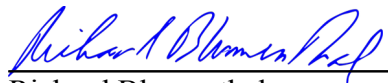
Sincerely,



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



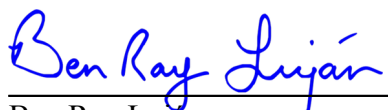
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



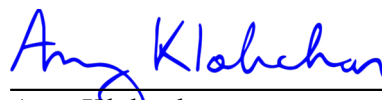
Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



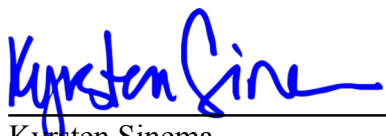
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



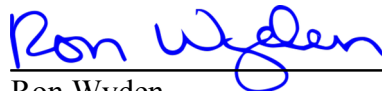
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator