

SUPPORT THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S STUDY

May 23, 2011

Hon. Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Shelby, Chairman Rehberg, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The undersigned organizations respectfully request that you provide FY2012 funding of \$193.9 million for the National Children's Study (NCS) within the National Institutes of Health Office of the Director, as proposed by the President's Budget. This funding will allow for the continuation of the pilot phase of the NCS.

As you know, the National Children's Study is the largest and most comprehensive study of children's health and development ever planned in the United States. The 37 "vanguard centers" have recruited over 3,000 participants thus far and more than 650 children have been born into the study. The Vanguard pilot centers have been successfully testing recruitment, retention, and data collection strategies that will be integrated into the main study when it is scheduled to begin in 2012. When fully implemented, this study will follow a representative sample of 100,000 children from across the United States from before birth until age 21. The study will also generate data on women that will inform clinicians, researchers and policy makers on important aspects of maternal health care and conditions to help improve the outcome of pregnancy. The data generated will inform the work of scientists in universities and research organizations, helping them identify precursors to disease and to develop new strategies for prevention and treatment. Identifying the root causes of many childhood diseases and conditions, including preterm birth, asthma, obesity, heart disease, injury and diabetes, will reduce health care costs and improve the health of children. Many of these childhood conditions are precursors to costly, chronic adult diseases. Researching the childhood origins of adult disease is a necessary and cost-effective prevention strategy.

We applaud and appreciate the sustained support for this study in previous years. Because of this support, the study was able to begin recruiting at an additional 30 locations this past fall. While we recognize that federal resources are extremely constrained, it is crucial that Congress fully fund the pilot phase of the National Children's Study and thereby continue to demonstrate its commitment to this extremely valuable research and to America's children.

Thank you again for your continued support of child and adolescent health research. We look forward to working with you as the Subcommittee moves forward with the appropriations process for Fiscal Year 2012.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Sleep Medicine
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Educational Research Association
American Heart Association
American Pediatric Society
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
American Society for Bone and Mineral Research
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Thoracic Society
Arthritis Foundation
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Population Centers
Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Professionals
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)
Autism Speaks
Cerebral Palsy International Research Foundation
CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Cooley's Anemia Foundation
Easter Seals
Epilepsy Foundation
First Candle/SIDS Alliance
Jeffrey Modell Foundation
Learning Disabilities Association of America
March of Dimes
National Association of Children's Hospitals
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Fragile X Foundation
National Osteoporosis Foundation
Organization of Teratology Information Specialists
Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation
Parents of Kids with Infectious Diseases (PKIDs)
Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health
Population Association of America
RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association
Society for Adolescent Health & Medicine
Society for Pediatric Research
Society of Toxicology
Spina Bifida Association
The Endocrine Society
Trisomy 18 Foundation