



## Archived Policy Statement

# Genetic Alliances Opposes Cuts to Maternal and Child Health

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 14, 2011

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write to you on behalf of Genetic Alliance to convey our opposition to the proposed cuts to the Title V Maternal & Child Health (MCH) Block Grant included in the revised House continuing resolution. While we are relieved to hear that the revised bill has reduced the proposed cut from \$210 million to \$50 million and grateful for your support, we are still concerned that the proposed cut would devastate this essential program.

Genetic Alliance is the world's largest network of health organizations, numbering more than 10,000 organizations, and we are dedicated to improving health through meaningful engagement of communities and individuals. The Genetic Alliance network includes more than 1,200 disease-specific advocacy organizations representing the millions of men, women, and children suffering from disease.

The proposed cut to the Title V MCH Block Grant would reduce the budget of this effective and important program and devastate the state and local programs serving our women, babies and children, including special needs children. Moreover, the proposed cut is shortsighted and counter-productive, as health issues that we do not prevent or detect early will ultimately cost us all more later on. As an example, a premature baby costs an average of \$58,000. Thus the investment in programs that prevent maternal and child health issues, such as prematurity, end up saving us all money. While we all understand the difficult financial challenges facing us, we feel strongly that our budget should not be balanced on the backs of our nation's youth.

We thank you for your continued interest and support for maternal and child health issues. As the leader of Genetic Alliance, I see the profoundly positive impact the MCH Block Grant program has on some of our nation's most underserved members, including special needs children. As the mother of two children with an inherited genetic disease that leads to blindness, I have firsthand knowledge of the challenges that childhood diseases pose and feel

the need to ensure these individuals are not marginalized. It is my hope that our nations women, children, and babies and continue to count on your support and strong leadership.

Sincerely yours,

Sharon F. Terry  
President and CEO