



December 11, 2007

The Honorable Harry Reid
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Reid,

On behalf the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, I would like to thank you for your efforts to include a \$7.5 million increase for the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) in FY08. I also want to ask for your continued support as Congress seeks to reach a compromise on FY08 appropriations. We are deeply concerned that an inability to secure at least \$116.5 million in funding for NCHS – a \$4.6 million increase – would harm certain essential NCHS programs.

As you know, NCHS serves as the premier agency for the collection of our nation's statistical information on numerous health issues. Full funding is vital to sustain its ability to provide organizations such as ours with critical data, particularly on births. As an organization that seeks to improve the well-being of children, youth, and families by reducing the nation's high rates of teen and unplanned pregnancy, the National Campaign relies heavily upon NCHS data to track progress at the national and state level and identify disparities among different segments of the population. These data are absolutely essential to our efforts to inform the public, policymakers, practitioners and the media about teen and unplanned pregnancy and to mobilize evidence-based action.

Last week, for example, NCHS released data showing that for the first time in 14 years, the teen birth rate has increased. These numbers have generated important attention and will hopefully lead to more intense action nationwide to reduce teen pregnancy. Similarly, past NCHS data revealed that the rate of teen pregnancy among Latinas has declined half as fast as the national average. This catalyzed the Campaign to launch a Latino Initiative to mobilize and support Latino communities in preventing teen pregnancy. Were NCHS unable to continuously collect these important data, organizations and efforts like ours would be severely compromised.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support for at least \$116.5 million for NCHS for FY08. We realize that the current fiscal environment means you face tough choices and sincerely hope you give strong consideration to this modest investment. Please contact Andrea Kane, Senior Director of Policy and Partnerships, at (202) 478-8554 or Jessica Swafford, Manager of Public Policy, at (202) 478-8529 for any further information regarding this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah S. Brown".

Sarah S. Brown
CEO