



April 16, 2010

The Honorable Todd Tiaht
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Tiaht:

On behalf of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, I would like to express our strong support for the inclusion of \$129 million in funding for evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs in the Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill. This increase of \$16 million over the FY 2010 appropriated level is consistent with the President's Fiscal Year 2011 budget request. We greatly appreciate your leadership in making an historic investment in funding for such programs in FY 2010, and urge you to maintain and expand this commitment to help address the pressing problem of teen pregnancy facing our nation.

Since The National Campaign was founded in 1996, our organization has focused intensely on understanding which interventions have the strongest evidence of changing teens' behavior. While there is still much to learn in this field, there is now persuasive and growing evidence that a number of programs have been shown through rigorous scientific study to help teens avoid the risky behavior that leads to pregnancy. The Office of Adolescent Health, working closely with other agencies at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has worked quickly and carefully to design a program consistent with the provision in the FY 2010 funding bill. This funding will provide much needed support for a wide range of public and private entities to replicate teen pregnancy prevention programs with strong evidence of success, as well as to develop and test innovative strategies and promising programs.

This funding is welcome news to organizations throughout the country that are concerned about high rates of teen pregnancy. We are please that so many organizations seem poised to take advantage of the new opportunity. The National Campaign has worked to raise awareness about this initiative and the response has been immense – more than 2,500 individuals have participated in Campaign-sponsored webinars, and the National Campaign's web page dedicated to the new funding has amassed nearly 18,000

visits since its launch in late December. It is clear that there is great interest and need among state and community organizations for resources to reduce teen pregnancy.

This funding is especially important at a time when the progress on reducing teen pregnancy may be unraveling. Rates of teen pregnancy and childbearing are on the rise for the first time since the early 1990s. Combined with the fact that state and local resources are severely limited, this investment is critical to helping communities around the nation reverse this troubling trend. This funding will not only help reduce the nation's high rate of teen pregnancy, but will also contribute to progress on other issues of importance to the Committee, such as improving academic achievement, reducing child poverty, and improving maternal and child health. Reducing too-early pregnancy and childbearing will also save taxpayer dollars.

Again, thank you for your commitment to preventing teen pregnancy and improving the well-being of children and families. We appreciate the fiscal constraints facing the Committee and respectfully urge you to increase the investment in evidence-based programs to reduce teen pregnancy. We look forward to working with your office. Please contact Jennifer Drake, Manager of the Campaign's Teen Pregnancy Funding Initiative Policy, at 202-478-8529 or jdrake@thenc.org, for any further information regarding this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Sarah S. Brown