Dear Representatives Ryan and Pelosi, and Senators McConnell and Schumer:

As local, state, and national organizations dedicated to the health and success of youth in this country, we urge Congress to continue funding for the Office of Adolescent Health’s (OAH) Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (TPPP). TPPP provides competitive grants to organizations across the country to replicate a wide variety of programs that have been rigorously evaluated and demonstrated to change teens’ behavior, or to rigorously evaluate promising programs. Last July, OAH awarded 81 five-year grants, for Fiscal Years (FY) 2015 – FY2019. If funding continues in FY 2017 and beyond, these grantees are expected to serve 1.2 million teens over the next five years, roughly double the number served by the first round of grants which ran from FY 2010 to FY 2014. Since the first round of TPPP grants began in 2010, the teen birth rate in the U.S. has declined 35 percent, about twice as large as the decline in any other five-year period. While no one program could be solely responsible for this decline, it is undeniable that over the past six years TPPP has played a leading role in a growing national, state, and local commitment to using proven approaches to reduce teen pregnancy. During this same time, the rate of progress has accelerated dramatically. While Congress works on funding for FY 2017, it is essential to preserve the funding and maintain the existing commitment to evidence in these programs.

The TPPP emphasizes evidence and evaluation, targeting federal funds to programs that work in order to continue making progress on reducing teen pregnancy. The teen pregnancy and teen birth rate have declined by an impressive 55 percent and 64 percent respectively since the early 1990s. There have been declines across all racial and ethnic groups, and in all 50 states. Yet it is still the case that roughly one in four girls in this country will become pregnant before the age of 20, and significant disparities persist. The United States has the highest rate of teen pregnancies in the developed world—more than 560,000 pregnancies to teens each year. At a
time when the U.S. needs to become more competitive in the global economy, our teen pregnancy rates are still much higher than our trading partners and competitors, putting us at a disadvantage.

Moreover, reducing teen pregnancy saves money. A study by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy found that in 2010 alone, teen childbearing cost U.S. taxpayers at least $9.4 billion. The same study estimated that the U.S. realized $12 billion in savings in 2010 because of the declines in the teen birth rate between 1991 and 2010. An analysis by the Brookings Institution determined that replicating effective teen pregnancy prevention programs such as those supported by TPPP are cost-beneficial—in other words, these federal outlays save more public funding than they cost.

Furthermore, a 2015 survey found that most adults (74%) believe that federal funds for preventing teen pregnancy should be invested in programs that work—that is, those programs that have been demonstrated to change behavior related to teen pregnancy. In another 2015 poll, 83% of adults support the TPPP.

Initiatives to reduce teen pregnancy contribute to progress on a host of other critical issues that are important to Americans, such as ensuring that each young person in this country can complete his or her education. Only half of teen mothers get a high school diploma by age 22, and less than two percent will complete college by the time they turn 30. More than four-fifths of adults and teens say that reducing teen pregnancy is a very effective way to reduce the high school dropout rate and improve academic achievement. Teen mothers and their infants are also at increased risk for poor health outcomes, such as preterm birth and low birth weight.

Evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs represent strategic investments by the federal government to address the nation’s high rates of teen pregnancy. We hope that you will stand with the many groups below to protect this funding that will improve the lives of youth and future generations, while reducing public sector costs.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

The AIDS Institute
Afterschool Alliance
Altarum Institute, Center for Prevention
America’s Promise Alliance
American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Public Human Services Association
American School Health Association
American Sexual Health Association
AMTC & Associates
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
Catholics for Choice
Child Welfare League of America
Children’s Advocacy Institute
Children’s Aid Society Carrera Program
Cicatelli Associates Incorporated
Coalition of National Health Education Organizations
The Dibble Institute
The Emily Program
Esperanza
Eta Sigma Gamma
ETR Associates
Fathers & Families Coalition of America
Feminist Majority
Girls Inc.
Healthy Teen Network
March of Dimes
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)
National Association of County Human Services Administrators
The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc.
National Coalition of Pastors’ Spouses
National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza
The National Crittenton Foundation
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Foster Care Coalition
National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference
National Network of STD Clinical Prevention Training Centers
National Network for Youth
National Organization for Women
National Women’s Law Center
The New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good
North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology (NASPAG)
Nurse-Family Partnership National Service Office
The Partnership for Male Youth
People For the American Way
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
The Policy and Research Group
Population Connection Action Fund
Progressive Policy Institute
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Institute
Republican Majority for Choice
Results for America
Select Media, Inc.
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States
The Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Society for Public Health Education
Sojourners
Third Way
Union for Reform Judaism
Wyman Center
YWCA US
State and Local Organizations

AZ
Concilio Latino de Salud, Inc. (Phoenix)
South Mountain WORKS Coalition (Phoenix)
Southwest Behavioral Health Services

CA
Adolescent Medicine, Pediatrics, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California (Los Angeles)
California Association of School Health Educators
California Family Health Council
Camp Fire Orange County
Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County, Inc.
Coronado High School Cal-SAFE Program (West Covina)
East Valley Community Health Center (Pomona and West Covina)
Family Service Agency of San Francisco
Hispanas Organized for Political Equality
Legacy 4 Kids LLC (Napa)
Mount Toro High School Salinas Union High School District Teen Parent Program Cal-SAFE (Salinas)
Petaluma Health Center
Public Counsel Law Center – Children’s Rights Project (Los Angeles)
STEPP Program (Truckee)
Stockton Unified Early Childhood Education Cal-SAFE
Teen Success, Inc.
Valley Community Clinic (North Hollywood)

United Health Centers of the San Joaquin Valley

CO
Colorado Youth Matter
Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains

CT
Greater New Britain Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Inc.’s Pathways/Senderos Center
New Haven Public Schools

FL
Healthy Teens Coalition of Manatee County
Investing In Our Youth, Inc. (Quincy)
Philemon Ministries (Apopka)
Trinity Church, Peacemakers Family Center (Miami)
Planned Parenthood of South, East and North Florida (Miami)

GA
HEAT, Inc. Holistic Education for the Advancement of Teens (Norcross)
MAYFC – Metro Atlanta Youth for Christ (Norcross)
Morehouse School of Medicine (Atlanta)

HI
Hawaii Youth Services Network
Family Support Hawaii (Kailua-Kona)
Hale ‘Opio Kaua‘i, Inc. (Lihu’e)

IL
411 Teen Health (Decatur)
Chicago Department of Public Health
Rockford MELD (Rockford)
IN
A Positive Approach to Teen Health (PATH, Inc.) (Valparaiso)
Health Care Education and Training (IN and WI)

KY
Community Connections Resource Center (Louisville)

LA
Lift Louisiana

MD
Crittenton Services of Greater Washington

MI
Kaizen Corporation for Children & Families: Princesses within Motherhood (Pontiac)
Project-U-Turn Inc. (Detroit)
YMCA of Metro Detroit
Antonia M. Villarruel, PhD, FAAN
Associate Dean for Research and Global Affairs, Professor and Nola J. Pender Collegiate Chair,
University of Michigan School of Nursing

MN
Rum River Health Services, Inc. (Princeton)

MO
The Teen Pregnancy & Prevention Partnership
Better Family Life, INC (St. Louis)

MS
Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Marks, MS)

NC
SHIFT NC
Cabarrus Partnership for Children (Concord)

NE
The Adolescent Health Project of the Women’s Fund of Omaha
West Central District Health Department (North Platte)

NM
New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community

NV
Southern Nevada Health District

NY
Changing the Odds, Morris Heights Health Center (The Bronx)
Metro Council for Teen Potential (Rochester)

OH
All About Me Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (Cincinnati)
Family Planning Association of Northeast Ohio, Inc. (Painesville)
Partners for Successful Youth – Lucas County, Ohio Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition
Public Children Services Association of Ohio

PA
Family Planning Plus of SUN & MJ Counties (Lewisburg, PA)
John B. Jemmott III, Ph.D.
Professor, School of Medicine and Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
Loretta S. Jemmott, R.N., Ph.D
Professor, School of Nursing
University of Pennsylvania

RI
The Rhode Island Alliance

SC
South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
Child Abuse Prevention Association/CAPA (Beaufort)

TN
A Step Ahead Chattanooga
A Step Ahead Foundation
A Step Ahead Foundation of Middle Tennessee
A Step Ahead Foundation of West Tennessee

TX
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, District XI
Baylor Teen Health Clinic (Houston)
Healthy Futures Alliance (San Antonio)
Image Means Everything (Houston)
Joshua Blessings Pregnant, Parenting, Homeless (PPH) Youth Programs

(Dallas)
LifeWorks (Austin)
The North Texas Alliance to Reduce Teen Pregnancy
Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
The Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
Parents Anonymous of Tyler Inc. (Tyler)

VA
Department of Global and Community Health, George Mason University (Fairfax)
Parenting Cooperative Program (Culpeper)

WI
Community Advocates Public Policy Institute
IndependenceFirst (Milwaukee)
Pathfinders Milwaukee, Inc.
Health Care Education and Training (IN and WI)

WV
Mission West Virginia