June 25, 2018

The Honorable Anna Eshoo 241 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable Leonard Lance 2352 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Eshoo and Representative Lance,

The undersigned organizations committed to the health and wellbeing of mothers, infants, children and families applaud introduction of H.R. 6085/S. 3029, the *PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2018*, and support its swift passage.

Every day, one in ten infants is born premature in our nation. Preterm delivery can happen to any pregnant woman, and often its cause is unknown. Preterm birth is the leading contributor to infant death, and those babies who survive are more likely to suffer from intellectual and phy sical disabilities. In addition to its human, emotional, and financial impact on families, preterm birth places a tremendous economic burden on our nation. A 2006 report by the National Academy of Medicine found the cost associated with preterm birth in the United States was \$26.2 billion annually, or \$51,600 per infant born preterm. Employers, private insurers and individuals bear approximately half of the costs of health care for these infants, and another 40 percent is paid by Medicaid.

The original PREEMIE Act (P.L. 109-450) brought the first-ever national focus to prematurity prevention. For several years after its passage, preterm birth rates dropped by small but significant increments. Unfortunately, for the past three years, preterm birth rates have once again risen. In particular, troubling racial disparities in preterm birth persist, with black women experiencing preterm birth rates more than 50% higher than white women. Clearly, our nation must redouble its efforts to ensuring that every pregnancy and baby is as healthy as possible.

The *PREEMIE Reauthorization Act of 2018* demonstrates Congress's continued commitment to our most vulnerable infants and their families by supporting federal research and promoting known interventions and community initiatives. We applaud your sponsorship of this critically important legislation, and we strongly support its passage. If our organizations may be of further assistance, please contact Cindy Pellegrini at March of Dimes at cpellegrini@marchofdimes.org or 202/659-1800.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days American Academy of Pediatrics American College of Nurse-Midwives American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists American Psychological Association American Public Health Association American Thoracic Society Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs Association of State and Territorial Health Officials Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses Birth Equity Collaborative California Breastfeeding Coalition Children's Dental Health Project Children's Hospital Association Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Cribs for Kids **Every Mother Counts Every Woman CT Family Voices Ferring Pharmaceuticals First Focus** March of Dimes MomsRising National Hispanic Medical Association National WIC Association **Nurse-Family Partnership** PCOS Challenge: The National Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Association Preeclampsia Foundation PreemieWorld, LLC **Prevent Blindness** Rhode Island Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Society for Reproductive Investigation Stanford University