



October 21, 2020

The Honorable Maggie Hassan  
United States Senate  
324 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
United States Senate  
520 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Hassan and Cassidy,

We write to express our strong support for the Maternal Immunization Enhancement Act and the Maternal Immunization Coverage Act. We appreciate your leadership around modernizing and improving maternal immunization rates.

Since 2004, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has issued recommendations on the importance of maternal immunization, and currently recommends that all pregnant women receive the influenza, tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid, and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccines. Unfortunately, a recent survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that "many pregnant women are unvaccinated, and they and their babies continue to be vulnerable to influenza and pertussis infection and potentially serious complications including hospitalization and death."

Pregnant women seeking access to and coverage for vaccines encounter multiple barriers, including lack of information about recommended vaccines, financial hurdles, and technological and logistical obstacles. Additionally, vaccine confidence and hesitancy issues remain a challenge. Your legislation seeks to change this and would help improve access to and utilization of maternal vaccines by ensuring first dollar coverage of vaccines for perinatal women enrolled in Medicaid; adopting the recent prenatal immunization quality measure; and requesting much sought-after data on obstetric patients and providers.

As immunizations are a highly cost-effective form of preventive medicine that help save lives by protecting the health and wellbeing of individuals and families in communities nationwide, it is in our nation's interest to improve immunization coverage rates as a means to improve maternal health outcomes. With several promising new vaccines in the research pipeline for life threatening conditions that could provide important health benefits to pregnant women and their children, now is the time to focus on improving immunization rates in the perinatal population.

Again, thank you for leadership on the Maternal Immunization Enhancement Act and the Maternal Immunization Coverage Act. Members of AVAC stand ready to work with you on this, and other important and effective solutions around vaccines.

Sincerely,

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families  
American Immunization Registry Association  
American Lung Association  
American Public Health Association  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Biondavax pharmaceuticals  
Biotechnology Innovation Organization  
Families Fighting Flu  
Hep B United  
Hepatitis B Foundation  
Immunization Action Coalition  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
March of Dimes  
National Consumers League  
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases  
STChealth LLC  
The AIDS Institute  
The Gerontological Society of America  
Trust for America's Health  
Vaccinate Your Family  
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease