

September 22, 2015

The Honorable Katherine Clark
United States House of Representatives
1721 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ryan Costello
United States House of Representatives
427 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC, 20515

Dear Representatives Clark and Costello,

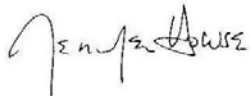
On behalf of the March of Dimes, a unique collaboration of scientists, clinicians, parents, members of the business community, and other volunteers affiliated with chapters representing every state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, I am pleased to offer our support for the Bringing Postpartum Depression Out of the Shadows Act of 2015. We commend your leadership on an issue of major importance for maternal and child health.

Postpartum depression is a condition that takes a devastating toll on mothers, infants, and families, but it can be treated if it is diagnosed. Recent studies have found that as many as 16% of new mothers are affected by postpartum depression, which can disrupt the critical bonding that takes place between mother and newborn, as well as cause a host of other debilitating symptoms in the afflicted. Tragically, when a mother suffers from maternal depression, this can also lead to adverse outcomes for her child.

This legislation would increase much-needed access to screening and treatment for postpartum depression by providing additional resources to states. Targeted federal grants would build upon successful state and local efforts to develop and implement programs that could improve and increase both screening and treatment. And the Act ensures that these grants would be geographically diverse, enabling the federal government to promote a wide variety of program options, in order to build best practices and find the most successful tactics to screen for and treat maternal depression.

The March of Dimes is pleased to join prominent provider and maternal and child health groups in support of the Bringing Postpartum Depression Out of the Shadows Act. We look forward to working with you actively toward its successful enactment. If we may be of further assistance, please contact James Gelfand at 202-659-1800 or JGelfand@marchofdimes.org.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jennifer L. Howse
President