



July 16, 2018

The Honorable Patty Murray
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20010

Dear Senator Murray,

On behalf of March of Dimes, a unique collaboration of scientists, clinicians, parents, members of the business community, and other volunteers representing every state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, I would like to express our support for the Stop Shackling and Detaining Pregnant Women Act.

March of Dimes has been deeply disturbed by reports that pregnant women seeking asylum or attempting to enter the U.S. have been detained, denied medical care, and placed in shackles, including during labor and childbirth. These practices run directly counter to long-established immigration and detention policies as well as medical recommendations. Some of these practices can pose a direct threat to the health or life of the woman and her baby. Media reports have cited cases of pregnant women experiencing miscarriage and other medical crises, yet being denied medical treatment. Such practices defy not only U.S. law but the most basic standards of human decency.

The Stop Shackling and Detaining Pregnant Women Act would take important steps toward protecting the health and wellbeing of pregnant immigrant women. The bill would reinstate the presumption that pregnant women should not be detained except under extraordinary circumstances, allowing them to be in the community where they can access medical care, good nutrition, and other support. It places strict restrictions on the use of shackles or other restraints on pregnant women at any time and protects their privacy during medical care. Finally, the bill states that pregnant detainees should have access to appropriate medical services if detained.

As an organization dedicated to strong women and healthy babies, March of Dimes appreciates your efforts to ensure pregnant immigrant women are given the humane treatment and services they deserve. If we be of further assistance, please contact Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Government Affairs Cynthia Pellegrini at 202/659-1800.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stacey D. Stewart'.

Stacey D. Stewart
President