



## Summary of the 2020 End-of-Year Funding and COVID Relief Package

On December 21<sup>st</sup>, after months of stalled negotiations and political wrangling, Congress jointly passed two bills that were combined into one legislative package. The package included \$1.4 trillion of annual funding for the federal government for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2021 and \$900 billion of COVID-19 relief. After months of Congress not passing any additional COVID-19 relief since the CARES Act in March, the bill was agreed upon by leadership in the House and Senate on Sunday afternoon.

In addition to passing the legislative package yesterday, Congress also passed a weeklong stopgap funding measure to maintain current funding for the government while Congress finalizes the logistics to prepare the bills for presentation to the President to sign into law. The President is expected to sign this package into law. Below is a breakdown of some of the highlights and select provisions – many of which March of Dimes advocated for – that Congress included in the package that improve the health of all moms, babies, and families.

### Annual Funding:

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) received \$97 billion, which is an increase of \$2.1 billion above the current funding levels. Key Agencies were funded as follows:

- **National Institute of Health (NIH)** received \$42.9 billion, which is an increase of \$1.25 billion or 3% increase above the current funding level.
  - *Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)*: \$1,590,337,000
    - Includes an increase in \$10 million for research aimed at enhancing the survival and healthy development of preterm infants
  - *National Institute of Environmental Health*: \$814,675,000
  - *Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO)*: \$180 million
  - *The Office of Director*: Stresses more focus on this research, including research related to gynecology and obstetrics, to address rising maternal morbidity and mortality rates; rising rates of chronic debilitating conditions in women
  - *Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH)*: \$43,925,000, an increase of \$5 million, recognizes ORWH efforts to ensure that NIH-supported research addresses issues that affect women, promote the inclusion of women in clinical research, and develop and expand opportunities for women throughout the biomedical research career pipeline
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** received \$7.9 billion, which is an increase of \$125 million above the FY 2020 enacted level and included \$856 million in transfers from the Prevention and Public Health Fund
  - Safe Motherhood: \$63 million includes:
    - \$17 million for maternal mortality review committees
      - Build stronger data systems; improve data collection at the State level and create consistency in data collection; support data collection efforts to further understand maternal heart disease and improve outcomes for pregnant women with heart conditions



- \$2 million for preterm birth
  - Section 317 immunization program: \$613,647,000
  - Newborn Screening Quality Assurance Program: \$18 million
  - National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities: \$167,810,000
    - Emerging threats to moms and babies: \$10 million
    - Birth defects research and surveillance: \$19 million
    - Folic acid campaign: \$3,150,000
    - NAS: \$2,250,000: To include improving surveillance and data to translate findings into improved care for mothers and babies
  - Office of Smoking and Health: \$128,100,000
- **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):** \$7.5 billion, which is an increase of \$151 million above the current funding level
  - Health Workforce:
    - Midwife training: \$2,500,000 to educate midwives to address the national shortage of maternity care providers and lack of diversity in the maternity care workforce
  - Maternal and Child Health: \$975 million, an increase of \$32 million for programs to improve maternal and child health
    - Maternal and Child Health Block Grant: \$712 million
    - Healthy Start: \$128 million, with \$15 million for reducing maternal morbidity
  - Title X family planning program: \$286 million
  - Maternal mental health hotline at \$3 million **to be staffed by qualified counselors, 24 hours a day**. Funding may also be used for outreach to raise awareness about maternal mental health issues and the hotline. The cost of the hotline is less than 75 cents per new mother.
  - Screening and Treatment Maternal Depression at \$5 million (flat funded): will provide grants to states to address **maternal mental health**. This program was launched in 2018 and states are working to:
    - Educate frontline providers, such as obstetricians and pediatricians, about maternal mental health conditions so they can screen and treat their patients;
    - Provide real-time psychiatric consultation to the frontline providers for more complex cases;
    - Provide resources and referrals for affected women and families.
- **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ):** \$338 million, flat funded, no increases
  - Prenatal care for pregnant individuals: the agreement encourages support for research into efforts to encourage access to prenatal care for expectant mothers
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** \$6 billion, an increase of \$133 million above the current funding level
  - Screening, Brief interventions, referral and treatment: \$30 million
  - Supports the continued efforts of expanded implementation of screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment and its possible impact on reducing the costs of neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). Encourages SAMHSA to conduct a study on



existing pilot programs on treatment related to maternal mortality and NAS to determine if such programs can be scaled within SAMHSA programs to address this important issue

- Pregnant and postpartum women: \$32,931,000, SAMHSA to prioritize States that support best-practice collaborative models for the treatment and support pregnant women with opioid use disorders
- **Office of the Secretary—General Departmental Management:** \$551 million, which is an increase of \$6 million above the current funding levels
  - \$108 million for the Teen Pregnancy Prevention program
  - \$35 million for the Office on Women’s Health, an increase of \$1.5 million above the 2020 enacted level

#### **COVID-19 Relief Package:**

- **HHS:** \$73 billion to support public health, research, development, manufacturing, procurement, and distribution of vaccines and therapeutics; diagnostic testing and contact tracing; mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment services; child care support; and other activities related to coronavirus.
- **CDC:** \$8.75 billion to support federal, state, local, territorial and tribal public health agencies to distribute, administer, monitor, and track coronavirus vaccination to ensure broad-based distribution, access, and vaccine coverage.
  - \$4.5 billion for State, local, Territorial, and Tribal Public Health Departments
  - \$300 million for a targeted effort to distribute and administer vaccines to high-risk and underserved populations, including racial and ethnic minority populations and rural communities
- **NIH:** \$1.25 billion to support research and clinical trials related to the long-term effects of COVID-19, as well as continued support for Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics for COVID-19
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** \$4.25 billion
- **Administration for Children and Families:** \$10.25 billion.
  - Child Care and Development Block Grant: \$10 billion for child care, including direct support for child care providers for fixed costs and operating expenses, to help ensure working parents have access to child care so they can work or return to work
  - Head Start: \$250 million to help Head Start programs address additional costs related to COVID-19
- **Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund:** \$48.345 billion
  - Testing: \$22.4 billion for testing, contact tracing, and surveillance.
    - \$2.5 billion for high risk and underserved populations and \$790 million is transferred to the Indian Health Service
  - **Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA):** 19.695 billion for vaccine, therapeutics and diagnostic developments



**Additional COVID-19 Relief Provisions:**

- Requiring HHS to **expand, enhance, and improve public health data systems** used by the CDC
- Allowing for **flexibilities to home visiting programs** funded by the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program to allow them to serve at-risk pregnant women and families during the pandemic, for the duration of the public health emergency period
- **Includes \$13 billion** to bolster SNAP benefits by 15%
- Help with **health and child care expenses** by making flexible spending accounts (FSAs) more generous and easier to use through 2021
- Permanent expansion of **telehealth** for mental health services
- A **three year extension** of expiring Medicare, Medicaid, and Public Health programs, including Community Health Centers and Teaching Health Centers
- Makes **health care more affordable** by permanently changing the threshold for deducting medical expenses to 7.5% of income
- **Paid Sick and Family Leave:** Extends the refundable payroll tax credits for paid sick and family leave, enacted in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, through the end of March 2021. An important temporary step, but one that falls far short of the needed extension of emergency paid sick and family leave through the end of 2021 to the employees affected by COVID
- **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP):** \$284 billion for additional loans and extends PPP through March 31, 2021. Disappointingly, the forgivable loans would be further restricted to businesses and nonprofits with 300 or fewer employees, instead of the expanding the program to larger nonprofits including those with more than 500 employees
- **Deductions for Charitable Giving:** extends and modifies the non-itemizer charitable deduction for 2021 and increases the maximum amount that may be deducted to \$600 for married couples filing a joint return
- **Expanding Limits on Giving:** Extends for one year the increased limit from the CARES Act on deductible charitable contributions for corporations from 10 percent to 25 percent and for taxpayers who itemize from 60 percent to 100 percent of adjusted gross income
- **Expanding Unemployment Assistance:** Unemployed individuals get an additional \$300/week from Dec. 26, 2020 to March 14, 2021