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April 16, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone,

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, is pleased to support the *Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2019*. We thank you for leading the effort to stem the alarming increase in teens and young adults using tobacco products.

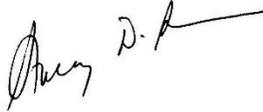
Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.ⁱ Not only do tobacco products harm those who use them, they also endanger the health of those exposed to their dangerous byproducts, including pregnant women and their developing infants. Smoking while pregnant is associated with low birth weight, increased stillbirth rates, and premature birth.ⁱⁱ Exposure to secondhand smoke during pregnancy poses the very same threats to infants.ⁱⁱⁱ Use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) is problematic for this population as well. There is no known amount of nicotine that is safe during pregnancy, and no studies have been done on the safety of e-cigarettes in pregnant women.^{iv} The skyrocketing use of e-cigarettes among female high schoolers is particularly alarming because of the threat it poses to health of these young women, including any future pregnancies.

It is critical to implement comprehensive tobacco control measures to reduce and prevent tobacco use among our nation's young people. The *Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2019* would take a significant step in that effort by implementing a sweeping set of policy changes to reduce tobacco use, including raising the minimum age to purchase all tobacco products to 21, banning flavored tobacco products, prohibiting the sale of tobacco products online, and limiting advertising of e-cigarettes. These measures are essential to preventing a new generation of Americans from becoming addicted to deadly tobacco products.

March of Dimes enthusiastically endorses the *Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2019* and stands ready to support you in your efforts to swiftly pass this important

legislation. For additional information, please contact Rebecca Abbott, Deputy Director of Federal Affairs for Public Health (202.292.2750 or rabbott@marchofdimes.org).

Sincerely,



Stacey D. Stewart
President and CEO

ⁱ Gentzke AS, Creamer M, Cullen KA, et al. Vital Signs: Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2018. *MMWR Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2019;68:157–164. Available at https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6806e1.htm?s_cid=mm6806e1_w.

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Smoking During Pregnancy. Available at https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/health_effects/pregnancy/index.htm.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} CDC. E-Cigarettes and Pregnancy. Available at https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/substance-abuse/e-cigarettes-pregnancy.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Freproductivehealth%2Fmaternalinfanthealth%2Ftobaccousepregnancy%2Fe-cigarettes-pregnancy.htm.