



March of Dimes Advocacy Agenda 2018

The March of Dimes supports policies at both the federal and state levels to advance the health of women, children and families. In all our work, the March of Dimes promotes health equity and addresses disparities related to social, structural, or demographic factors such as race, gender, income or geographic region. Our goal is healthy mothers and strong babies.

In 2018, our top state advocacy priorities are:

Insurance Coverage and Services. The March of Dimes supports policies that helps ensure all women, children and families have affordable, quality health coverage that covers the services they need. The March of Dimes opposes proposals that will cause fewer people to have insurance, dramatically increase the cost of coverage, or limit access to key services like maternity and newborn care. In particular, the March of Dimes promotes Medicaid coverage and services for low-income women of childbearing age, pregnant women, and babies, such as prenatal care, well child care, and contraception to promote healthy birth spacing.

Newborn Screening. Every year, thousands of infant lives are saved or improved by newborn screening. The March of Dimes champions initiatives to ensure that every state screens every newborn for all the conditions on the recommended universal screening panel, many of which can threaten a baby's health or survival in the first days or weeks of life. We also advocate for infrastructure and funding to support newborn screening systems and ensure the timeliness of newborn screening tests.

Tobacco Prevention and Cessation. Tobacco use is a leading cause of poor birth outcomes and infant health problems. The March of Dimes promotes a wide range of policies to deter people from starting to use tobacco products and to help those who do use them to quit. Raising the legal purchase age of tobacco to 21 in every state is a top priority.

Health Equity. Ensuring every pregnancy and baby is healthy can only be achieved if the stark racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, geographic, and other disparities in maternal and child health are addressed directly. The March of Dimes supports policies that reduce disparities associated with social determinants of health, such as pregnancy accommodations in the workplace, home visiting, group prenatal care, opioid treatment, and more.

For more information, contact March of Dimes Director of State Government Affairs Shelly Bateman at sbateman@marchofdimes.org or 202.659.1800.

The March of Dimes is a national voluntary health agency whose volunteers and staff work to improve the health of infants and children by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. Founded in 1938, the March of Dimes funds programs of research, community services, education and advocacy. For the latest resources and information, visit marchofdimes.org or nacersano.org.