

July 20, 2011

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United State Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye, Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Cochran and Ranking Member Shelby,

We, the undersigned, are writing in support of the full funding request for the National Children's Study in fiscal year 2012. This study was authorized by the Children's Health Act of 2000 and is one of the most important and comprehensive research efforts looking at children's health and development and all the factors that can impact them.

The study has a goal of studying at least 100,000 families focusing on children from before birth – by recruiting women and mothers to be – through the age of 21 from 105 locations nationwide. The National Children's Study will look at the effect of environment – air, water, diet, sound, family dynamics, community and cultural influences, and genetics – on children's health. Data from the study – which will be made available as soon as possible – will develop prevention strategies, policy solutions, and guide further research.

Importantly the study will examine how the events and exposures of early life can lead to specific outcomes including birth defects, asthma, obesity, diabetes, and mental health disorders among other possible outcomes. Science continues to emerge and show that early exposures, especially those during vulnerable times of development, are linked to future adverse health effects.

One key component of the National Children's Study will be increased biomonitoring to determine what chemicals pregnant women, the developing fetus, and newborn child are exposed to. Currently the CDC only has comprehensive biomonitoring data for children 6 and older, but as we know key moments of development happen while the fetus is still in the womb. By testing samples of blood, urine, and breast milk from pregnant women and their newborn babies, the National Children's Study will provide a broad picture of the industrial chemicals that both are exposed to, some of which have been show to cause serious harm in numerous animal studies.

There are great and growing concerns about the increased rate of chronic and acute disease in the United States and the National Children's Study is designed to help all Americans have a better understanding of the links between those diseases and our environment. However, to ensure the

study's success it is critical that it continues to receive the necessary funding throughout each and every stage. No study has ever followed children from before birth to age 21 but to do so the National Children's Study must receive sufficient and consistent funding.

As you know the study is a partnership among several federal organizations but is led by the Eunice Kennedy Shiver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). As such the appropriations for the National Children's Study is housed in the appropriation for the NIH Office of the Director.

We urge you to fund the National Children's Study at the fully requested amount of \$193.88 million for fiscal year 2012.

If you have any questions please contact Jason Rano at Environmental Working Group at 202-939-9125 or jrano@ewg.org.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Environmental Working Group

Alaska Community Action on Toxics

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

BlueGreen Alliance

Breast Cancer Fund

Calhoun County Resource Watch

Californians for Pesticide Reform

Citizens' Environmental Coalition

Clean New York

Empire State Consumer Project

Environmental Defense Fund

Environmental Health Fund

Farmworker Association of Florida

Global Community Monitor

Grassroots Environmental Education

Healthy Child Healthy World

Informed Green Solutions

Natural Resources Defense Council

Oregon Environmental Council

Pesticide Action Network of North America

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Science and Environmental Health Network

Texas Injured Workers

Women's Voices for the Earth