



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

January 25, 2012

Michael C. Lu, M.D., M.P.H.  
Chairperson  
Secretary's Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality  
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 13-91  
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Dr. Lu:

Thank you for your recent letter sharing the concerns of the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality (SACIM) regarding the impact of proposed budget cuts on important programs administered by HHS and other federal agencies to improve infant mortality rates. We remain committed to improving the health and nutrition of mothers, infants, and families.

The maternal and child health programs discussed in your letter provide important services and benefits to millions of women and children across the country. In addition to the programs you note, the Affordable Care Act contains provisions that will not only increase the number of women who have health insurance coverage but will also help ensure that women and children receive the preventive services they need to lead healthy lives. This includes the removal of cost sharing requirements for certain preventive services like annual well woman visits, vaccinations, and other important screenings. Other provisions for infant health and nutrition will improve coverage for services that support breastfeeding. HHS implementation of the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 will also increase the number of pregnant women and infants with health insurance coverage and improve the quality of care provided to women in the perinatal period and infants.

Our collective efforts at the federal level and in collaboration with our state and community partners can make a difference. I appreciate the contributions of the SACIM to assist in the Department's efforts to optimize birth outcomes and the health of all infants born in the United States.

Sincerely,

/S/

Kathleen Sebelius