

Durbin, Duckworth announce \$2 million to provide maternal & child health services in Illinois

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today announced that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has awarded the Illinois Department of Public Health with \$2,135,940 in federal funding to improve access to and the quality of health care for mothers, children, and their families, especially for those with low-incomes or limited availability of care, throughout Illinois. This funding is provided through the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant program within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

“Illinois mothers, children, and families need access to quality, affordable health care,” said Durbin. “With this grant, I am glad that HHS and the Illinois Department of Public Health are working to address health disparities in our state, especially for women and

children. Make no mistake, initiatives like this will die if Republicans in congress repeal the Affordable Care Act. The health care repeal bill, passed by the House of Representatives and now being written in secret in the Senate, would slash funding for the Medicaid program—which provides health coverage for half of Illinois’ children—and make it harder for women to access maternity and newborn care.”

“If a woman can’t access or afford the pre-or post-natal health care she needs, it can devastate her entire family – and our nation’s strength depends on the strength of our families,” said Duckworth. “Every American – no matter where they are from – should be able to access quality preventive and primary health services, and this funding will go a long way to help ensure families across Illinois can get the care they need before and after a child is born.”

The MCH Services Block Grant program seeks to improve the health of all mothers, children, and their families. Title V MCH program funding, combined with state investments, have provided a significant funding source to improve access to and the quality of health care for mothers, children, and their families in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the territories. The MCH Services Block Grant program is required to:

- Assure mothers and children access to quality care, especially for those with low-incomes or limited availability of care;
- Reduce infant mortality;
- Provide and ensure access to comprehensive prenatal, delivery, and postnatal care to women (especially low-income and at risk pregnant women);
- Increase the number of low-income children who receive regular health assessments and, follow-up diagnostic and treatment services;
- Provide and ensure access to preventive and primary care services for low income children as well as rehabilitative services for children with special health needs;
- Implement family-centered, community-based, systems of coordinated care for children with special health care needs (CSHCN); and
- Provide toll-free hotlines and assistance with applying for services to pregnant women with infants and children who are eligible for Title XIX (Medicaid).