

## The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

### Why a State Match Requirement is Bad for Children & Families

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program supports voluntary, evidence-based home visiting models in all 50 states as well as in many territories and tribal communities. Home visiting breaks multi-generational cycles of poverty and puts families on the path to good health, educational success and economic stability.

Despite strong bipartisan support and decades of evidence that MIECHV-funded home visiting programs work, Congress allowed MIECHV to expire on September 30. One funding renewal proposal would undermine home visiting programs across the country by imposing a dollar-for-dollar state match.

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#### States may be forced to cut home visiting services if required to match MIECHV money.

The state match requirement works by limiting the state's use of their MIECHV grants to 50 percent of the home visiting services supported by MIECHV. States must come up with the other half of the money needed to provide MIECHV services.

**To meet the required funding match, states may be forced to cut other programs or services,** to divert money to meet the match. This “rob Peter to pay Paul” approach is likely to negatively impact the health, education and well-being of children and families.

**States may be forced to cut existing non-MIECHV-funded home visiting programs to divert funding to MIECHV-supported home visiting,** potentially leaving thousands of children and families without home visiting services. States should not be penalized for implementing home visiting programs in communities across the state in a way that meets the needs of its residents.

**If states are unable to meet the match, they may be forced to cut MIECHV home visiting services in part or entirely,** causing local programs to shut down, home visitors to lose or leave their jobs, and families to lose the services they rely on. And once the home visitor-family relationships at the heart of program – the very relationships that make it so successful – are lost, the damage will be irreversible.

**Even if states meet the state match, the imposition of the requirement will restrict the flexibility they have to do what is needed for its residents.** Currently, each state has the freedom to invest in and implement early childhood programs, including home visiting, in a way that best serves their children and families. The state match will take place new restrictions on how money is used for home visiting.



#### Christine's Story

In October 2014, following the birth of her second child, Christine was visited in her hospital room by a representative from Healthy Families America, an organization that provides home visiting to help families thrive.

Since that day, thanks to the women, first Libby and then Sasha, who came to her house each week, Christine has left an unhealthy marriage, enrolled in college, earned her first medical license as an Emergency Medical Technician and is on track to become a paramedic. She says, “Home visiting gave me the routine my family needed.”

*Christine's story is possible because MIECHV provides Oregon with the flexibility it needs to assess and to address the needs of its residents.*