

Public Policy Update



October 2, 2017

Last week, Congress failed to complete action to reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV). We should be very proud of the progress that has been made with the House and Senate bills, but we acknowledge that this news is a disappointing development. Now more than ever, the work must continue to support advocacy efforts to reauthorize this program which is critical to so many NFP sites.

Where We Are

On Tuesday, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act by a vote of 214-209. The bill would reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program for 5 years at its current funding level of \$400 million and make a number of policy changes. Click [here](#) to read our full policy update on that bill's passage.

In the Senate, Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) have introduced their own bipartisan MIECHV reauthorization bill titled the Strong Families Act, S. 1829. The bill has 13 [bipartisan cosponsors](#). S. 1829 does not include a state match. Here is a helpful [side by side](#) of the House and Senate bills.

NFP-NSO is supportive of the Senate legislation and is actively working to encourage support of the measure, both on Capitol Hill and in the field. Last week, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) allocated FY17 funding to states. States will begin to make budgetary decisions soon, and without authorization for future funding for FY18 and beyond, programs run the risk of being in jeopardy.

Next steps

Now that the House has passed its version, the bill moves onto the Senate for consideration, where some negotiations are likely to take place between the House and Senate bills before anything is attached to a moving "vehicle" for passage. Possible vehicles could be the CHIP reauthorization and/or legislation to reauthorize other expiring extenders. Timing is uncertain but momentum is on our side.

NOW is the most important time to make a final, aggressive push on our MIECHV advocacy! We need ALL NFP and MIECHV supporters to follow-up with their Members of Congress and staff and remind them why MIECHV needs to be reauthorized and how the September 30th expiration will impact communities that rely on this federal funding. **A big next step will be getting as many Senators as possible to sign-on to the Senate bill (S. 1829).** Here's how you can help:

- Did you have a meeting or organize a site visit with a Member of Congress and/or staff this year? Send a follow-up message to remind them that MIECHV needs to be reauthorized NOW OR organize a local district or state office meeting. If they are a Senator or Senate office, be sure to ask the Senator to sign-on to the S. 1829.
- Turn up the volume and share this action alert with friends and family. We need as many people as possible to weigh in with Congress about the importance of MIECHV by writing letters, making

phone calls, using social media, etc. Go to www.supportnfpfamilies.org to contact your Members of Congress.

- Promote MIECHV reauthorization on [social media](#).
- Keep it up! Your voices are more powerful and valuable than ever to make the case for MIECHV. Be on the lookout for upcoming updates, planned days of action, and state specific next steps. We are here to help! If you need assistance, please contact Katelyn Moga at katelyn.moga@nursefamilypartnership.org