September 27, 2018

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Russell Senate Office Bldg.
404 Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for the Reach Every Mother and Child Act, Senate 1730

Dear Senator Cruz:

On behalf of the more than 3,900 pediatrician members of the Texas Pediatric Society, the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I write to request your support for S.1730, the Reach Every Mother and Child Act of 2017. The Texas Pediatric Society has made it our mission to do all in our power to advocate for the health and wellbeing of Texas children. However, we know that despite the work we must do to improve the lives of Texas children there are many more children around the world who do not enjoy the same quality of living and healthcare. We must show them the same love and compassion as we do for our own.

The Reach Every Mother and Child Act can be the vehicle for our compassion as a country. The bill will help partner countries end preventable maternal, newborn and child deaths across the globe. In particular, the bill makes USAID’s Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator position permanent to ensure alignment across the agency’s relevant programs. The bill also importantly supports other countries’ ownership, transparency and accountability and sustainability financing so that they may learn, with our help, to become more self-sufficient.

While we’ve made incredible global progress reducing maternal and infant mortality rates, we still have work to do as:

- About one million newborns die on their very first day of life from causes that are almost entirely preventable.
- Nearly 300,000 women die annually due to complications during pregnancy or childbirth.
- Malnutrition contributes to approximately 45% of deaths among children under the age of five; this amounts to three million children’s lives lost each year.
- The poorer the household, the greater the risk of maternal death, with 99% of the maternal deaths occurring in the developing world.

While ambitious, the goal of ending these preventable deaths is completely achievable if our aid programs are being maximized to their fullest potential. The Texas Pediatric Society asks that you fully support the Reach Every Mother and Child Act by cosponsoring the legislation along with the 13 other members of the Texas Congressional delegation.

Sincerely,

Ben Raimer, MD
President, Texas Pediatric Society