



SACIM Report on Prematurity

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Secretary's Advisory Committee on
Infant Mortality
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PREEMIE Act Charge

(3) Plan for HHS preterm birth activities.--Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Advisory Committee (or an advisory committee in existence as of the date of enactment of this Act and designated by the Secretary) shall develop **a plan for conducting and supporting research, education, and programs on preterm birth** through the Department of Health and Human Services and shall periodically review and revise the plan, as appropriate. The plan shall-

- (A) examine research and educational activities that receive Federal funding in order to enable the plan to **provide informed recommendations to reduce preterm birth and address racial and ethnic disparities** in preterm birth rates;
- (B) **identify research gaps and opportunities to implement evidence-based strategies to reduce preterm birth rates** among the programs and activities of the Department of Health and Human Services regarding preterm birth, including opportunities to minimize duplication; and
- (C) reflect input from a broad range of scientists, patients, and advocacy groups, as appropriate.

Congressional Intent

- **Documentation of Congressional intent beyond the plain language of the statute is scanty**
 - Law was passed without much debate in committee
 - No committee reports
 - Brief floor debate does not mention the plan
- **March of Dimes insights into Congressional intent**
 - Worked closely with the sponsors in drafting and progress
 - Strong sense of wishing to move forward with urgency, purpose, and use of evidence-based strategies
 - Desire to have structure and direction to the work, rather than simply allowing it to continue

Recommended Plan Priorities

- Elevating preterm birth as a national priority
- Increasing research into preterm birth
- Improving data collection, analysis, and dissemination
- Working to eliminate social inequities
- Improving access to quality health care
- Training health professionals
- Increasing public and provide education

Using the Plan

- Focusing efforts and energies
- Driving appropriations
 - Increasing accounts and fending off cuts
- Impelling Administration agencies forward
- Providing material for state advocacy
- Galvanizing other stakeholders into action
- Shaping the next reauthorization

Thank you!



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