



September 17, 2018

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler  
1107 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Beutler:

On behalf of the First Focus Campaign for Children, a national bipartisan children's advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families a priority in federal budget and policy decisions, I commend your work on behalf of at-risk pregnant women and support your draft bill, released on September 11, 2018 to address the health and well-being of pregnant women and infant children. We believe your position to continue federally supported data collection that focuses on the identification of social determinants of maternal mortality, including health risks and outcomes, is the correct approach in tackling this ongoing crisis.

We also support your focus on promoting the physical, mental and behavioral health of mothers. As you know, many women in our country, particularly those in the African-American and tribal communities, do not receive the health care they need to sustain a healthy pregnancy or protect their infant child.

First Focus Campaign for Children is committed to raising awareness of the issue of maternal and infant mortality. According to the CDC, African-American mothers are three to four times more likely than their white counterparts to die from complications during pregnancy or childbirth. Women in tribal communities are also more at risk of complications from childbirth, which is why we also commend your focus on Native American women and children.

First Focus is ready to partner with your office to ensure we address this important issue that impacts far too many pregnant woman, children and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley".

Bruce Lesley  
President