

Davis Hails Grants to Support Evidence-Based Home Based Visiting Programs to Help Parents and Children

For immediate release

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Congressman

Danny K. Davis today hailed the announcement by HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius of \$224 million in grants to help at-risk families voluntarily receive home visits from nurses and social workers to improve maternal and child health, child development, school readiness, economic self-sufficiency, and child abuse prevention. The grants are part of the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program funded by the Affordable Care Act and were awarded to 49 state agencies that applied.

Research has shown that home visiting programs can improve outcomes for children and families, including improving maternal and child health, reducing child maltreatment, increasing parental employment and improving the rate at which children reach developmental milestones. \$124 million was awarded in formula grants to states for FY 2011 including \$4,296,218 to Illinois. \$34 million was awarded to 13 states in development grants which have modest home visiting programs and want to build on existing efforts. \$66 million was awarded in competitive grants to nine states that have already made significant progress towards implementing a high-quality home visiting program as part of a comprehensive early childhood system. Illinois received \$2,709,014 in competitive grant awards.

Congressman Danny K. Davis, working closely in bipartisan fashion with Rep. Todd Platts (R-PA), led the effort to include this provision in the Health Reform Bill. Rep. Davis noted:

"This bill will have a significant impact on Illinois children and families and as direct support for pregnant women and moms with babies as a key prevention effort. Illinois is a national leader in home visitation with 30% of children entering care for the first time under age one and roughly half of those babies before they are three months old. Given the recent study reported in the JAMA signalling an increase in infant deaths, potentially due to the economy, it is more critical than ever that we prevent cuts to essential health care services and shore up our support for infants and young children. These home visiting programs are one of the most effective and economical methods of providing that support."
