

## The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

# Why a State Match is Bad for Louisiana's Children & Families

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program supports voluntary, evidence-based home visiting models in Louisiana and every state as well as many territories and tribal communities. Home visiting breaks multi-generational cycles of poverty and puts families on the path to good health, educational success and economic stability.

Despite strong bipartisan support and decades of evidence that MIECHV-funded home visiting programs work, Congress allowed MIECHV to expire on September 30. One funding renewal proposal would undermine Louisiana's home visiting program by imposing a dollar-for-dollar state match.

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**Louisiana will be forced to cut home visiting services if required to match federal MIECHV money.**

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The state match requirement works by limiting the state's use of their MIECHV grants to 50 percent of the home visiting services supported by MIECHV. States must come up with the other half of the money needed to provide MIECHV services.

**Because of a \$1.5 billion budget shortfall, to meet the required funding match, Louisiana will be forced to cut other programs or services,** to divert money to meet the match. This "rob Peter to pay Paul" approach is likely

to negatively impact the health, education and well-being of Louisiana's children and families.

**Louisiana may also be forced to cut existing non-MIECHV-funded home visiting programs to divert funding to MIECHV-supported home visiting,** potentially leaving thousands of children and families without home visiting services. Louisiana should not be penalized for implementing home visiting programs in communities across the state in a way that meets the needs of its residents.

**If Louisiana is unable to meet the match, the state may be forced to cut MIECHV home visiting services in part or entirely,** causing local programs to shut down, home visitors to lose or leave their jobs, and families to lose the services they rely on. And once the home visitor-family relationships at the heart of program – the very relationships that make it so successful – are lost, the damage will be irreversible.

**Even if Louisiana meets the state match, the imposition of the requirement will restrict the flexibility the state has to do what is needed for its residents.** Currently, Louisiana has the freedom to invest in and implement early childhood programs, including home visiting, in a way that best serves Louisiana's children and families. The state match will prevent Louisiana from helping residents in communities across the entire state by placing new restrictions on how the money is used for home visiting.



**What Louisiana Secretary of Health Dr. Rebekah E. Gee said about the state match:**

*"Such a requirement for states to match federal dollars one-for-one would be detrimental to Louisiana, which is facing a budget shortfall of \$1.5 billion. Louisiana would be forced to cut home visiting services or other critical programs to divert money to home visiting."*

Source: [Letter to La. Congressional delegation](#)