

April 5, 2010

The Honorable Ben Nelson  
720 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

I am writing to ask for your support of the Visiting Nurse Association of Omaha's (VNA) FY11 Appropriations request entitled "Comprehensive Home Visitation Services to At-Risk Mothers and Children." This funding would enable the VNA to provide a host of important home visitation services to young, at-risk mothers. These services would help keep the mother and baby healthy, encourage the mother to stay in school, and ultimately prevent intergenerational cycles of disadvantage.

Adolescent parents and their children represent populations at increased risk for medical, psychological, developmental, and social problems. Research shows that children of teen mothers have worse cognitive/behavioral outcomes, teen mothers are more dependent on public assistance, experience more turmoil in family structure, and are at high risk of dropping out of school. Home Visitation can break intergeneration cycles of disadvantage by providing supportive systems and structures to young mothers and families.

The VNA has a long history of mother/child home visitation. The program will recruit participants through referrals from different organizations. Home Visits will be provided every two weeks and the VNA will monitor outcomes. By providing life skills coaching through the parent coach and public health nurses, the young mother can be mentored and supported, creating a much more positive environment for both mother and child.

I greatly appreciate all that you have done for the VNA in previous years and ask for your continued support on this project.

Sincerely,



James C. Summerfelt  
President and CEO

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