



Judith B. Robson
Wisconsin State Senator

September 28, 2010

Karen Timberlake, Secretary
Department of Health Services
1 West Wilson Street
Madison, WI 53702

Secretary Timberlake:

I am the chairperson of the Special Committee on Infant Mortality that has been charged with developing a strategic proposal, including any necessary legislation, to address infant mortality in Wisconsin, particularly disparities in infant mortality rates in different geographic areas of the state.

The Special Committee has heard testimony about the importance of data in designing effective programs and strategies to address infant mortality, to evaluate those programs, and to demonstrate their value. In these times of particularly tight state finances, it is also especially critical to provide an accurate and thorough cost-benefit analysis of proposed programs. Accurate timely data will help enable procurement of possible new ARRA funds, other federal funds and grants, and support from private foundations. Timely data will also allow the public health system to more accurately project needs and facilitate community awareness and collaboration. This data will also help justify continued support for public health issues relating to low birth-weight babies, and neonatal and infant mortality.

To these ends, I am writing to request that the Department gather the information specified in items 1, 2 and 3 in the attached letter from Committee member Dr. Thomas Schlenker, and provide it to the Committee by November 9th. In addition, whenever possible, please identify the types of health care providers who provided prenatal care for or delivered each infant for whom data is provided.

I understand that some of the data requested may not be available or accessible. The Committee staff will be happy to work with the Department to refine and clarify this request as needed.

Thank you for your assistance with this important work.

Sincerely,

Senator Judy Robson
Chairperson, Special Committee on Infant Mortality