



**Senate Bill 09-179
Fact Sheet**

Our Mission

The March of Dimes, the champion for babies, is dedicated to improving the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality.

We urge your support of

SB09 - 179 Communicable Disease Control -- Modifies certain provisions of communicable disease control laws.

Sponsors: Senator Tochtrop and Representative Gagliardi

Background: Perinatal mother-to-child (vertical) transmission of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a major cause of HIV infection and consequent acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) among children. Great progress has been made in reducing vertical HIV transmission with highly effective antiretroviral medications that are most effective when given during pregnancy, throughout labor, and into the early weeks of an infant's life. With optimal treatment, vertical transmission of HIV can be reduced from about 25% to 2% or less (ACOG Opinion 304, Nov-2004). Optimal treatment required early identification and treatment of all pregnant women.

The March of Dimes supports the unanimous policy of AAP, ACOG, CDC, and IOM, advocating for universal HIV screening in the U.S. as part of routine preconception and prenatal care for women, with their informed consent on an "opt-out" basis. The March of Dimes endorses current CDC recommendations, including that all jurisdictions should consider strategies to best implement these recommendations and consider revising laws that may pose obstacles to the "opt-out" approach to HIV screening of pregnant women, including rapid testing of newborns of women whose HIV status is unknown.

The March of Dimes strongly urges your support of this initiative.

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