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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-3701

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COMMITTEES:

EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

21ST CENTURY COMPETITIVENESS
EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

SCIENCE

ENERGY
SPACE AND AERONAUTICS

Review Committee
Premier Cares Award
P.O. Box 668800
Charlotte, NC 28266-8800

Dear Review Committee:

I am pleased to nominate Community Action Opening Doors maternity outreach program for the Premier Cares Award. Opening Doors ensures hundreds of low-income women each year will deliver healthy babies by connecting primarily uninsured, Spanish-speaking pregnant women in suburban and rural areas of Washington County, Oregon, with local health care providers. As a member of the Community Action board of directors, I have observed this critical program since its inception, and believe it is worthy of the Premier Cares Award.

Opening Doors ability to seek out and mentor at-risk women has resulted in 99% of these women receiving insurance and 96% birthing normal birth weight babies. This program has the healthiest babies, highest prenatal care rate, and lowest rates of high risk and complicated deliveries in Oregon. What's more, because of the success of this maternity outreach program, at least two partnering health care providers report a virtual elimination of emergency room visits from low-income women who have not received prenatal care. In short, Opening Doors Program is an outstanding program in Washington County and Oregon, and should be used as an example for other areas in the nation.

With health care costs at an all time high, it is important to highlight the service this program affords health care providers. Opening Doors staff work closely with their clients to ensure they keep their prenatal appointments, assist in properly filling out forms and paperwork, and often serve as interpreters for Spanish-speaking patients. Perhaps most importantly, this program reaches uninsured and at-risk clients who often fall through the cracks and then end up in an emergency room situation, thus costing the health care system millions of dollars. Opening Doors efforts are preventative and have very real economic savings for the health care industry.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of the enclosed nomination form, application and letters of recommendation. I believe you will find that Community Action Opening Doors is most deserving of this award.

With warm regards,

David Wu
Member of Congress

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