**S. \_\_\_\_: The Pregnancy Assistance Fund Reauthorization Act of 2019**

The Pregnancy Assistance Fund (PAF) program is a vital health and human services program directed to students who are pregnant and parenting and to pregnant women who have experienced sexual violence. It is the only federal program targeted uniquely to youth who are pregnant and parenting. Over the 10-year life of the program, over 94,000 people in 32 states and 7 tribal entities have benefitted from this competitive grant program.

PAF enables states and tribal entities to provide a seamless network of support services to youth who are pregnant and parenting and/or pregnant women who experience sexual violence. Participants in PAF projects receive a wide range of supports and services, including services related to parental and child health, as well as support services for parenting, education, employment, as well as support for supplies, such as diapers, food and baby equipment.

PAF is set to expire at the end of fiscal year 2019. The *Pregnancy Assistance Fund Reauthorization Act of 2019* would extend the existing program through 2024.

### Why This Matters

* Youth who are pregnant and parenting face many barriers to enrolling, attending and succeeding in high school and college, including discrimination, the challenge of juggling schoolwork with parenting and a lack of access to concrete supplies and health services for themselves and their children.
* Pregnancy and parenting responsibilities significantly increase a student’s risk of dropping out of school. In a nationwide survey of dropout youth, 33% of female dropouts and almost 20% of male dropouts said that becoming a parent was a major factor in their decision to leave school.
* Only 51% of women who gave birth as a teen have a high school diploma, compared to 89% of women who did not have a teen birth.
* Failure to provide full supports to youth who are pregnant and parenting so that they may complete their educations has severe short- and long-term consequences for the economic success and well-being of their families and communities, as well as our nation.
* Ensuring the success of students who are pregnant and parenting matters, not only for them but also for their children, who are more likely to thrive if their parents graduate.
* Participants in State and Tribal PAF projects have experienced positive outcomes including improvements in high school graduation, acceptance into Institutions of Higher Education, reductions in dropping out of high school, and reductions in subsequent unintended pregnancies.
* Youth who are pregnant and parenting who receive PAF-funded support are 43% *more* likely to graduate high school and 14% *less* likely to report an unintended pregnancy compared to youth who are pregnant and parenting who did not receive PAF-funded support.