



January 29, 2007

To: Representative Peggy Sayers  
Senator Maryann Handley

From: Roberta Schwane RN  
RN Case Manager, Windham Hospital

RE: Fetal Infant Mortality Review Program (FIMR)

Dear Representative Sayers and Senator Handley:

I have recently become aware that the Windham Area Fetal Infant Mortality Review Program (FIMR) is in danger of discontinuing operations due to the loss of state funding. I have been involved with this worthwhile program for approximately twenty years – initially as the Windham Action Plan for Infant Health and, over time, evolving into the FIMR program.

Before this program existed maternal-child health services in our area were very disconnected and uncoordinated. Individual practitioners and agencies attempted to provide quality services to the maternal-child population, but there was little communication between providers and no comprehensive identification of maternal/infant problems and barriers to maternal and infant care and services in the Windham area. It was this program that first identified maternal substance abuse as a significant factor in the health of the maternal/infant population in our area and our program was recognized by the state for bringing this issue to the forefront.

Over time, much to the credit of the FIMR program, we have seen some improvement in birth outcomes and infant mortality in our area. We have continued to examine factors in individual cases of poor outcomes and have continued to address improving systems issues as a community of providers.

The benefits this program provides to our community far outweigh the relatively small use of state budgetary funds. This low budget program is extremely cost effective through the decrease in costly poor birth outcomes which would be a large financial burden to the state.

I strongly support the continuation of the FIMR program and hope that the legislature will continue to provide funding support to this valuable program.

Sincerely,  
*Roberta Schwane*  
Roberta Schwane RN