

<<date>>

«motherfirstname» «motherlastname»

«Address1»

«Address2»

«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear Ms. «motherlastname»:

We invite you to participate in the Birth Defects Study To Evaluate Pregnancy exposureS (BD-STEPS). In <state>, this study is being conducted by <<state grantee and the **State Birth Defects Monitoring Program**> or <State grantee **Birth Defects Monitoring Program**>>. It is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study will help us understand why one out of every 33 babies is born with a birth defect. In addition, we have expanded the study to include research into why stillbirths happen. Little is known about what causes stillbirths or what can be done to prevent them. Our research study is trying to change that. We plan to speak with women who had pregnancies affected by birth defects or that ended in stillbirth as well as women whose pregnancies were not affected by birth defects or did not end in stillbirth.

State laws give the <State Birth Defects Monitoring Program> permission to review medical records to study causes of birth defects. This is how we identified most women for the study. Women whose pregnancies were not affected by birth defects were selected from women who gave birth in the same year.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a two-part telephone interview. The first part of the interview focuses on events before and early in your pregnancy while the second interview focuses on your pregnancy overall. After you complete the first part of the interview, you can complete the second part of the interview on the same call or you can schedule it for a later date. The first part of the interview takes about 55 minutes and the second part of the interview takes about 20 to 30 minutes. The interview can also be done in several shorter calls if that is more convenient. We are available for interviews every day of the week, including weekends and evenings. The interview covers a wide range of topics about your pregnancy. We will keep any information that could identify you confidential.

One of our interviewers will call you within the next two weeks. Before then, if you have any questions, please feel free to call the interviewers at our toll free number, 1-888-743-7324, or email them at [questions@bdsteps.org](mailto:questions@bdsteps.org). You can also call <Abt local number> or scan the QR code below, to reach the interviewers to schedule or complete your interview at a time that works best for you. Please make sure to leave a message with your best phone contact information. You may also call me at < insert local contact number>. If you do not want to participate, please let us know.

<<We have enclosed a \$20 gift card in appreciation of the time you spent reading the enclosed information and deciding if you want to take part in the study. This is yours to keep whether or not you decide to participate. If you complete the first part of the interview, we will send you a \$30 gift card to thank you for the time you spent on that part of the telephone interview. If you complete both parts of the interview, we will send you the \$30 gift card and an additional \$20 gift card to thank you for the time you spent on both parts of the interview.>>

**OR**

<<Note: We are not able to include the \$20 gift card that was sent with the previous introductory packet(s). If you complete the first part of the interview, we will send you a \$30 gift card to thank you for the time you spent on that part of the telephone interview. If you complete both parts of the interview, we will send you the \$30 gift card and an additional \$20 gift card to thank you for the time you spent on both parts of the interview.>>

Thousands of women across the country are taking part in this important research. This study will help us better understand the causes of birth defects and stillbirth. We hope that you will be a part of this effort. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,



< **Insert PI name and local contact information** >

Enclosures

**QR Code helpful tip:** With your phone's camera, simply hover over the QR code image in this letter, as if you were going to take a photo, and a link to the local phone number will appear. You can also use any other QR code reader app that you may already have.