



May 24, 2023

The Honorable Henry McMaster
Governor, State of South Carolina
1100 Gervais Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Governor McMaster,

I write today to respectfully request a continued appropriation of \$250,000 for the Sight Savers America vision screening program for under-resourced Pre-K children and their subsequent follow-up eye care program (requested funding at same level from previous year).

However, let me first thank you for the \$250,000 appropriation last year. That allowed our program to double the number of under-resourced Pre-K children we were able to screen and provide follow up eye care.

Sight Savers America partners with Impact America to provide free vision screenings for preschool-age children in Head Start and childcare programs located in under-resourced neighborhoods. Each year, approximately 10 percent of those children fail the vision screening and are referred to Sight Savers America for individual case managed follow-up eye care services.

Sight Savers America partners with local eye care providers across the state to ensure that children failing the vision screening receive a dilated eye examination and all necessary eye care treatment. This program is supported by the SC Optometric Physicians Association (SCOPA).

Prior to receiving state funding, this program typically screened over 10,000 underserved preschool-age children each year across the state. With the \$250,000 in state funding in 2022/23, that number is expected double to 20,000-22,000 children. Approximately 2,000-2,200 (10 percent) of these children are expected to fail the vision screening and be referred to Sight Savers America for follow-up eye care services.

These vision screenings and follow-up eye care treatment are vital for these children across the state, many of whom would not have access to such a screening. This program has a track record of success. We know that children's eye care is critical for each child to see well, read well, and to reach their full potential in school and in life. Without this program, many of these children's vision issues could remain undetected and untreated for years.

For these reasons, we are asking that the Governor continue his support of this critical program at the \$250,000 level for FY2023/24.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chad Nichols".

Chad Nichols
Chief Development Officer
Sight Savers America

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine McIntyre".

Catherine McIntyre
South Carolina State Director
Impact America