

Children Need Real Health Care Reform Now!

Today in our nation, more than 8 million children are uninsured and millions more are underinsured. Uninsured children suffer needlessly and even die for lack of care. Families experience the grief of loss, of worry, of medical debt and bankruptcy.

In this week's portion, as Rachel lies dying in childbirth, she names her child Ben-Oni, "son of my grief." His father, however, calls him Benjamin, "son of the right."

At this time, as our nation debates health reform, this passage raises for us the question: will children be worse off as a result of health reform or will they be better off? Will our children be children of grief or children of strength? What will the future hold for them?

It depends on us. Children need an effective national health safety net now! The final health reform bill must include a comprehensive, affordable, and accessible child health system wherever children live.



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Urge your Senators to build on what works for children by co-sponsoring Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania's Children's CHIP amendment that would expand and improve the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) by:

- Ending bureaucratic barriers that now keep 2 out of 3 of the more than 8 million uninsured children already eligible for CHIP or Medicaid from actually getting the care they need.
- Guarantee every child access to the full range of health and mental health benefits they need including preventive and specialized services now provided to all children in Medicaid by only to some children in CHIP. All children are of equal value.
- Eliminate the unjust lottery of geography and provide an affordable national health safety net for children in all states whose family income is at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level (\$55,125 for a family of four.)

Jacob set a monument upon Rachel's grave on the road to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. The best monument we can build to the children and families at risk of loss—of death, illness, and injury without needed care—is an effective national safety net. Let's get to work.