



## Healthy Children Have a More Hopeful Future: Tell Congress to Pass CHIP Extension NOW!

Despite bipartisan support in Congress and across the country for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which provides affordable, comprehensive, child-appropriate health coverage to almost nine million children across the country, Congress let the September 30 deadline to extend its funding pass without taking action. CHIP plays an important role in the health landscape for children, sitting on the shoulders of Medicaid to provide health coverage to children and pregnant women in families with incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, but too low to be able to afford private coverage. While you may not have heard of CHIP because it goes by a different name in each state, you definitely know children and families it serves. For the past nine months, Congress has been busy debating whether or not to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and destroy Medicaid as we know it. While those failed efforts were a major win for 37 million children who rely on Medicaid for their health coverage, in the midst of that major fight, funding for CHIP was left by the wayside.

Earlier this month it appeared strong bipartisan support for CHIP was coming together and growing and that Congress might move forward a strong, long-term extension of CHIP with bipartisan support, but momentum stalled. While there was broad support in the Senate Finance Committee for a bill to extend CHIP and support in the House Energy and Commerce Committee to move similar CHIP provisions, controversy arose because of serious concerns about bad proposals used to pay for CHIP and other pieces of the bill, and assertions many Republicans don't seem concerned about how to pay for tax cuts for wealthy individuals and corporations in their tax cut plan.

We're so close to the finish line. There is bipartisan support for CHIP. Congress is following regular order. Senate and House members, Republicans and Democrats alike, agree that we need a strong, five-year extension of CHIP funding to ensure states and families have the certainty they need when it comes to children's health.

Congress must not leave children, families and their doctors in this dangerous political limbo a minute longer. CHIP has been beloved for 20 years and the CHIP extension has bipartisan support. One-third of children enrolled in CHIP are in the states of House Speaker Paul Ryan, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer. Children need CHIP now. Why are we letting it get caught up in political posturing and debates?

***Tell Congress to pass CHIP now and not hold it hostage to partisan disagreements over how to pay for it or any other policy issues. Both the House and Senate will be back at work the week of October 23<sup>rd</sup> and passage of the CHIP extension must be first on their agenda. Please call (877) 233-9025\* TODAY and tell your Members of Congress CHIP must be passed now – children need their health care! Congress must stop playing politics with children's health.***

*\*When you call, you will hear an automated message asking you to press 1 for your senators or 2 for your Representative. You will then be asked to enter or say your zip code so they can connect you to the correct office where you will likely speak to a staffer in the office or get a voice mailbox.*