



American Public Health Association

Working for a Healthier World

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October 16, 2007

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association (APHA), the oldest, largest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world, dedicated to protecting all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and assuring community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States, I write to urge you to vote to override President Bush's veto of H.R. 976, the Children's Health Insurance Reauthorization Act.

H.R. 976 would invest an additional \$35 billion over 5 years to provide health care coverage to nearly 10 million low-income children whose families could not afford private health insurance and who do not qualify for the Medicaid program. The legislation will preserve health coverage for the nearly 6.6 million children currently covered by the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and will provide the same coverage to millions of additional children who are currently eligible over the next five years. APHA is also pleased that the bill will provide improved benefits to enrolled children including quality dental coverage, parity in mental health coverage and medically necessary benefits (EPSDT) for low-income children.

This bipartisan legislation is the product of intense negotiations by all parties involved. We ask that you uphold the intent of the overwhelming majority of the House and vote to override the President's veto of this critical public health legislation for our nation's low-income children.

Sincerely,

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (Emeritus)
Executive Director