



# American Public Health Association

*Working for a Healthier World*

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April 3, 2007

Dear Senator:

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 thank you for supporting the inclusion of \$50 billion in funding for the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) in the Senate budget resolution. This support signals your commitment to drastically reducing the number of uninsured children in this country and protecting the health of their families.

During the process of SCHIP reauthorization, APHA looks forward to working with you to ensure that a minimum of \$50 billion in additional funds is provided over five years for children's health coverage.

Ultimately, SCHIP reauthorization should address the following policy and legislative recommendations:

- Ensure that states have ample dollars to cover most children eligible for Medicaid or SCHIP, and give states financial incentives for covering more uninsured kids in their Medicaid and SCHIP programs.
- Strengthen the federal standard for SCHIP benefits packages to make it comparable to the Medicaid benefits package, which includes coverage of Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services.
- Provide adequate funding and give states the option to cover pregnant women and legal immigrant pregnant women and children in their SCHIP programs.
- Make revisions to federal law to give states the flexibility to deem children eligible for and enroll them in SCHIP or Medicaid based on information from other means-tested programs, such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children and the National School Lunch Program.
- Allow states the flexibility to determine the citizenship status of SCHIP and Medicaid applicants.

Thank you again for supporting the inclusion of \$50 billion in funding for SCHIP reauthorization in the budget resolution. We respectfully urge you to proceed on SCHIP reauthorization as quickly as possible so states have ample time to implement changes to the program in advance of the September 30, 2007, deadline.

Sincerely,

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