



Kaiser Health Disparities Report: A Weekly Look At Race, Ethnicity And Health

Politics & Policy | Two Utah Bills Seek To Lift Restrictions on CHIP, Medicaid Coverage for Documented Immigrant Children
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Utah state Sen. Luz Robles (D) and state Rep. Kory Holdaway (R) have introduced similar bills ([SB 225](#) and [HB 171](#)) that would eliminate a five-year waiting period for children of documented immigrants to become eligible for CHIP and Medicaid coverage, the [Salt Lake Tribune](#) reports. President Obama earlier this month [signed](#) into law a reauthorization and expansion of the program funded by an increase in the federal tobacco tax. The reauthorization includes a provision that allows states to eliminate a federal five-year waiting period for coverage of documented immigrant children. The two Utah bills would remove similar language from state eligibility requirements.

The cost of the bills has not yet been determined, but Judi Hilman, executive director of the [Utah Health Policy Project](#), projected the cost to be \$400,000 and estimated that 800 to 1,300 documented immigrant children would become eligible for the program. She said about 70% of documented immigrant children in the state are uninsured. However, the [Tribune](#) reports that "both lawmakers acknowledge that expanding public health programs could be a tough sell" while the state faces a budget deficit (Rosetta, [Salt Lake Tribune](#), 2/24).