



THE UTAH HEALTH POLICY PROJECT

Quality Health Care Coverage for All Utahns

455 East 400 South, Suite 312

Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

(801) 433-2299

www.healthpolicyproject.org

Key SCHIP Reauthorization Messages for Governor Huntsman & Utah's Congressional Delegation

To raise the visibility of SCHIP issue and lay the groundwork to help secure a strong SCHIP reauthorization bill, now is the time to contact Governor Huntsman, Senators Hatch & Bennett, and representatives Matheson, Cannon, and Bishop. The "ask" of governors is slightly different than the "ask" of our Congressional delegation and, as always, we urge you to tailor the message to reflect the specific proclivities of each member of Congress. A growing number of policymakers and national organizations are urging \$50-\$60 billion in new funding (over 5 years) for SCHIP reauthorization, which would allow states to enroll most of the eligible but uninsured children. *With our congressional delegation it is very important to include a specific dollar amount in our messaging on SCHIP.*

Governor Huntsman

Gov. H should be very sympathetic to what we're trying to achieve with respect to covering all kids (starting w/CHIP and Medicaid). This is the cornerstone of his health agenda, and we should make the most of his leadership to engage Sen. Orrin Hatch to help secure a strong SCHIP reauthorization.

Step 1: Re-Open CHIP in Utah. Gov H and Senator Hatch will get much further in their quest for a successful SCHIP Re-Authorization, if Utah is making wise use of CHIP. Right now the program is closed. It must be re-opened in this Legislative Session. Please urge members of the HHS Appropriations Subcommittee to rank CHIP higher on the priority list. Also, keep your eyes open for a possible legislative (via a bill) approach. For talking points, click [here](#).

The NGA. Governor H needs to work with the bipartisan leaders of the National Governors Association (including the leaders of NGA's Health and Human Services Committee) to urge adoption of a strong statement on the SCHIP reauthorization at the upcoming winter meeting. NGA must signal to Congress at its winter meeting that SCHIP reauthorization is a top priority for governors. *Specifically, the NGA should call on Congress to increase funding for children's coverage to ensure states can afford not only to maintain their current caseloads, but also to cover more uninsured children.*

*Governor H. should be clear that his goal is **not** simply to sustain states' current caseloads but rather to cover more children, which will require a significant investment of new resources. Even though Utah's CHIP enrollment is capped, Utah will need a fully funded re-authorization initiative to cover all kids.*

Congress

Utah's congressional delegation should be asked to support two key messages to help secure a strong SCHIP reauthorization:

- ? **Increase the federal government's investment in child health programs so Utah can cover more children.** It is not enough for Congress to provide funding that would only maintain current coverage. Congress should eliminate the remaining barriers that keep eligible children from gaining or retaining coverage and provide states with new tools and financial support to enroll more uninsured children in SCHIP and Medicaid.
 - States should also have the option to enroll legal immigrant children (those who arrived after 1996) and pregnant women who would otherwise meet Medicaid and SCHIP eligibility criteria.
 - Congress should not change coverage rules in such a way that force states to shut down successful family-based coverage programs.
- ? **Reject new funding for SCHIP that is financed by cuts in Medicaid.** Since SCHIP stands on the shoulders of Medicaid, cuts in Medicaid to finance SCHIP would weaken rather than strengthen children's health care coverage.