

# Partnership for Medicaid Partnership for Medicaid

April 28, 2014

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Fred Upton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Sens. Wyden and Hatch and Reps. Upton and Waxman,

On behalf of the Partnership for Medicaid – a nonpartisan, nationwide coalition of safety-net providers, counties, labor and health plans – we appreciate your leadership to protect children’s health and urge you to take action this year to continue funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). As you know, the funding authorization for CHIP is currently set to expire October 1, 2015, unless Congress approves its extension.

CHIP has been a reliable source of coverage for low-income children in working families whose parents earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but too little to afford private health insurance. Medicaid and CHIP serve as a vital safety net for our nation’s children. Since the creation of CHIP in 1997, the number of uninsured children has been cut nearly in half. Almost 93 percent of children have health coverage today and these incredible gains are in part because of the role of CHIP in covering millions of children nationwide. It is essential that Congress continues to fund CHIP in order to maintain our national investment in children’s health.

As organizations whose members provide health care to underserved populations, we see first-hand the difference that stable, affordable coverage makes for families and their children in accessing needed care. CHIP is an affordable coverage option that was specifically designed with children in mind. CHIP also allows states flexibility in designing their program and incentives for outreach and enrollment efforts that best meet the needs of their population. This has made CHIP a popular program among state leaders.

As states adjust to changes in health care coverage, we believe it is essential that Congress secure CHIP’s future this year so that states can continue to operate their programs without interruption. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the 12.7 million children expected to be enrolled in

fiscal year 2015 would be at risk of losing their CHIP coverage in 2016 if funding is not continued for the program.

Inaction or delayed action would allow funding for CHIP to lapse. This would disrupt coverage for millions of children and many children will have no other affordable coverage options available to them.

We look forward to working with the Administration, Congress and States to continue CHIP and ensure children have access to the care they need, when they need it.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Dental Association  
American Dental Education Association  
America's Essential Hospitals  
Association for Community Affiliated Plans  
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Children's Hospital Association  
Easter Seals  
The Jewish Federations of North America  
Medicaid Health Plans of America  
National Association of Community Health Centers  
National Association of Counties  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of Rural Health Clinics  
National Council for Behavioral Health  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Rural Health Association

cc: Sen. Harry Reid, Majority Leader, United States Senate  
Sen. Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader, United States Senate  
Rep. John Boehner, Speaker of the House, United States House of Representatives  
Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, United States House of Representatives  
Sen. John D. Rockefeller, Chair, Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health Care  
Sen. Pat Roberts, Ranking Member, Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health Care  
Rep. Joe Pitts, Chair, House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health  
Rep. Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health