



CALIFORNIA STATE PTA

LEGISLATION ACTION ALERT

DATE: October 5, 2007

Action Needed

State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Needs Your Support TODAY!

Children in California and nationwide need you to contact Senators Diane Feinstein and Senator Barbara Boxer and your House of Representatives members by fax, phone or email to urge their "yes" vote to override the President's veto of the SCHIP reauthorization.

Key Messages

- California State PTA urges you to vote "yes" to override the President's veto.
- This bill had broad bi-partisan support when it passed in Congress.
- We believe the entire California Congressional delegation must support this bill – it has enormous benefits for our State and for our children and families.
- Please do the right thing for California's children and families.

What's included in this alert:

1. How to find and contact your Congressional representative
2. Sample phone script
3. Sample fax
4. Background

1. HOW TO LOCATE AND CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATORS:

Senator Barbara Boxer:

United States Senate, 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510-0505
Capital Phone: 202-224-3553, Fax: 202-228-2382, <http://boxer.senate.gov>

Senator Diane Feinsten:

United States Senate, 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510-0504
Capital Phone: 202-224-3841, Fax: 202-228-3954, <http://feinstein.senate.gov>

House of Representatives:

Access the National PTA legislator locator through the National PTA website at
<http://www.congressweb.com/cweb4/index.cfm?orgcode=NPTA>

Scroll to the bottom of the page and insert your zip code. A new page will appear with the list of your representatives in Washington D.C. Click on each name to locate the Washington D.C. mail address, telephone number, facsimile number, and email address.

To find contact information for your legislators' local office, refer to your telephone directory, Government section, U.S. Government Information, Congress subheading.

2. SAMPLE TELEPHONE SCRIPT (OR DEVELOP YOUR OWN SCRIPT):

My name is _____ and I reside in _____. As a volunteer member of the California State PTA I ask that ___(Senator/Representative)___ vote “yes” to override the President’s veto of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

This bill had broad bi-partisan support when it passed in Congress. This is an issue that we believe the entire California Congressional delegation must support because of the enormous benefits it will bring for our State and our children.

Please do the right thing for California’s children. Vote “yes” to override the veto.

Thank you.

(If you are asked questions, please refer to the background information below.)

3. SAMPLE FAX (OR DEVELOP YOUR OWN TEXT):

Date

Your name, address, telephone contact information.

Dear *Senator or Congress member* _____:

As one of the nearly one million volunteer members of the California State PTA, I urge you to vote “yes” to override President’s veto of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

This bill had broad bi-partisan support when it passed in Congress. This is an issue that we believe the entire California Congressional delegation must support because of the enormous benefits it will bring for our State and our children.

Children’s health is critical to the well-being, academic success and life outcomes of our nation. Better health status can improve educational outcomes, thereby resulting in higher wages and improved economic well-being later in life.

Please do the right thing for California’s children. Vote “yes” to override the veto.

Sincerely,

IMPORTANT: Please report your action undertaken to lmayo@capta.org. Thank you.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The bi-partisan legislation approved by Congress would expand SCHIP spending by \$35 billion over five years, paid for by a 61-cent cigarette tax increase. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the \$35 billion increase would allow 4 million children who would otherwise be uninsured to be covered by 2012.

The current program enrolls nearly 6.6 million children nationwide from low-income families not poor enough to qualify for Medicaid. In California, there are 1.1 million children who currently benefit from the program - 830,000 children enrolled in "Healthy Families" and 250,000 in Medi-Cal - as well as 8,000 pregnant mothers in the Access for Infants and Mothers program. Children covered by Healthy Families are more likely to receive preventive care, such as immunizations, less likely to pass up going to the doctor when they are sick, and are healthier overall.

This is a vital issue for California!

The bill vetoed by the President is a product of bipartisan agreement. It is backed by most major medical groups, including the American Cancer Society, the American Hospital Association and the American Medical Association. Thirty governors including Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger also support the expansion of services to children and families in need.

In California, a child in a family of three that earns up to \$42,500 a year may be eligible. Research suggests that most Californians with incomes below twice the poverty line – \$41,300 for a family of four – may not be able to contribute any resources toward their health care and that partial subsidies are needed for many families with incomes well above three times the poverty line – \$61,950 for a family of four. According to a U.S. Census Bureau announcement September 2007, the number of American children without insurance rose by 700,000, to 8.7 million, in 2005.

Children's health is critical to the well-being of our nation. Studies document the importance of health coverage to children's well-being and life outcomes. Children with health coverage are more likely to have better health outcomes than those without. Children with a regular source of care are more likely to receive cost-effective, preventive services, such as immunizations, that lead to better health outcomes. Uninsured children, on the other hand, are more likely to lack a regular source of care and to have unmet needs for medical and dental care. Better health status can improve educational outcomes, thereby resulting in higher wages and improved economic well-being later in life.

If you would like to be added to our "Legislation email alert list," please send your name and email address to leginfo@capta.org.

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