



SHEILA DIXON
Mayor
250 City Hall
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

September 26, 2007

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to urge you to reconsider your threat to veto reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). The successful and popular program created 10 years ago with bipartisan support provides health insurance to over 6 million young children, many of whom live in our cities. Reauthorizing SCHIP with ample funding will allow the children of our cities to get the care they need, and will lessen the burden on our public health officials and emergency rooms. America's mayors called for full funding for SCHIP in "*The Conference of Mayor's 2007 10 Point Plan,*" and we do so again today.

As executives of some of America's leading cities and counties, we see the effects of uninsured children each day. Our emergency rooms treat children at a much higher cost and pass that cost on to taxpayers and local businesses. Children are unable to attend our schools due to preventable illnesses, and our businesses suffer when parents must stay home to tend to their sick children. The costs of uninsured children in our communities are visible and detrimental, but largely preventable.

Providing adequate funding for SCHIP will reduce the number of uninsured children in America by as much as five million. Ninety-one percent of Americans support covering more children. Covering millions of uninsured kids would be a remarkable legacy that you could be proud of.

But if you veto the children's health care bill, you will make it more difficult for each of us to ensure that the children in our cities are healthy. Covering uninsured children requires strong leadership from the federal government.

Come to our cities and counties, and meet the children who will be unable to go to visit a doctor if you make good on your veto threat. Meet the educators who know firsthand that sick children will miss school and be unable to fulfill their educational potential.

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Meet the hardworking parents who must take time from work to take a son or daughter to the emergency room for treatment of a critical condition that could have been treated with less pain and cost if he or she had had health coverage. And meet the state and local government officials from both parties, the faith leaders, the business owners, and the ordinary Americans who know that SCHIP has proven itself an amazing success at covering uninsured children and strongly support reauthorization.

Children are the future of our communities and our nation. SCHIP reauthorization is not about ideology and politics. It's about giving our children a healthy start in life. We urge you to reconsider your veto threat, for the wellbeing of our children.

Thank you for your consideration of our urgent request.

Sincerely,

Mayor Sheila Dixon
Baltimore, MD

Mayor David N. Cicilline
Providence, RI

Mayor Claudia Thomas
Lakewood, WA

Mayor Heidi Davison
Athens-Clarke County, GA

Mayor Peter Corroon
Salt Lake County, UT

Mayor JoAnn Seghini
Midvale City, UT

Mayor John Peyton
Jacksonville, FL

Mayor Gavin Newsom
San Francisco, CA

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Denver, CO

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