



John Hickenlooper
Governor of Colorado
Chair

Gary Herbert
Governor of Utah
Vice Chair

Dan Crippen
Executive Director

February 18, 2015

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hatch, Senator Wyden, Chairman Upton and Representative Pallone:

On behalf of the nation's governors, we urge you to act quickly to continue federal support and provide stability for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) until children and pregnant women covered by the program have access to affordable alternative coverage options.

CHIP is widely supported by governors, who recognize that access to health insurance is critical to ensuring a healthy start for our nation's children. According to an analysis from the Kaiser Family Foundation, the program has contributed to a 50 percent decline in the uninsured rate for children—from 14 percent in 1997 to 7 percent in 2012. Governors have consistently voiced their support for CHIP through the National Governors Association and, more recently, in nearly 40 responses to your committees' request for input on the future of the program.

Without congressional action, federal support for CHIP will expire September 31, 2015, creating uncertainty for states and millions of working families. More than two million children could lose access to the services they need to thrive and lead healthy, productive lives. Although governors have offered a range of perspectives on long-term funding for CHIP, certainty of funding in the near-term is needed so that states may appropriately budget and plan for their upcoming fiscal years.

The future of CHIP is a critical issue—one that should be addressed early in the 114th Congress. Governors urge you to protect children's coverage and give states certainty by moving quickly to maintain support for this important program.

Sincerely,

Governor Steve Beshear
Chair
Health and Human Services Committee

Governor Bill Haslam
Vice Chair
Health and Human Services Committee