



THE PARTNERSHIP FOR MEDICAID

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Partnership for Medicaid Calls on Congress to Act Now to Fund CHIP and Safety Net Programs

(WASHINGTON, DC) - The Partnership for Medicaid – a nonpartisan, nationwide coalition of health care providers, safety net health plans, counties and labor – calls on Congress to take immediate action to fund the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and a number of programs that protect our nation’s health care safety net with federal funding expiring October 1.

The Partnership strongly supports swift, bipartisan action by Congress to provide a long-term extension of CHIP and to address impending shortfalls for important safety net programs such as Community Health Centers, the National Health Service Corps, and the Medicaid disproportionate share hospital payment (DSH) program.

The Partnership greatly appreciates Senate Finance Committee leaders for introducing bipartisan legislation that would provide for a long-term, five year extension of CHIP. This is an important first step, but delayed congressional action means that coverage for millions of children and pregnant women is in jeopardy. CHIP is an important health coverage program for almost 9 million low-income children and 370,000 pregnant women. Created in 1997 with strong bipartisan support, CHIP builds on the Medicaid program to provide child appropriate benefits, access to pediatric providers, and cost-sharing limits to protect vulnerable children and families. CHIP, together with Medicaid, has brought the rate of uninsured U.S. children to an all-time low. If funding is not extended soon, states will be forced to make tough decisions such as impose waiting lists, limit coverage renewals, or dismantle their CHIP programs. States will make these decisions months before they exhaust leftover money, making swift congressional action critical to stave off harmful consequences of a further delay.

A lapse in federal funding for vital safety net programs like Community Health Centers, the National Health Service Corps, and the Medicaid DSH program also means patient access to primary and acute care services is threatened. A number of health care programs and providers rely on consistent federal funding to ensure they are able to provide needed and culturally competent services to millions of patients across the country. If the funding shortfalls persist after the October 1 deadline, providers will be unable to target investments to improve patient care and face challenges maintaining existing services to patients.

The Partnership urges Congress to take immediate action to extend funding for CHIP and other important safety net programs. States, providers, and families need Congress to act now in order to provide program stability and prevent major disruptions to patient access to care. The Partnership stands ready to work with Congress to address these priorities in a bipartisan manner.

Learn more about the Partnership for Medicaid at www.thepartnershipformedicaid.org.
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**This statement has not been individually endorsed by every Partnership member organization.*