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February 14, 2007

**Restore Equity in the State Children's Health Insurance Program**  
*Ensure Limited Dollars Cover Kids, Not Adults*

**Cosponsor the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Equity Act**

Dear Colleague,

Today, I introduced the SCHIP Equity Act. This bill would ensure that every SCHIP dollar is spent on needy children and pregnant women.

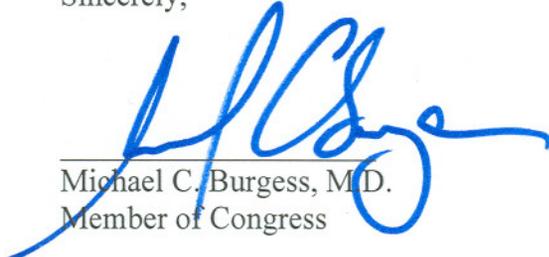
Since Congress enacted SCHIP in 1997, states have been successful in making affordable health insurance available to millions of low-income children. Prior to the enactment of SCHIP, low-income families that made too much money to be eligible for Medicaid coverage found it difficult to find affordable coverage for their children. Several million children were left without health coverage for important preventive health services, forcing their families to seek care in emergency departments and lacking vital continuity of care. With the federal and state partnership that is the cornerstone of SCHIP, needy families were able to obtain health coverage for their children that was previously just out of reach.

With the "capped entitlement" nature of SCHIP, where states receive a capped annual allotment from the federal government, states are required to prioritize coverage of the neediest children that Medicaid does not cover. Unfortunately, some states have extended coverage to non-pregnant adults under their SCHIP program, taking limited dollars away from the needs of the children the program was intended to meet. One dollar a state spends on a non-pregnant adult is one dollar not spent on a needy child. This inequitable development needs to be stopped dead in its tracks.

My bill would prohibit states from spending even a single SCHIP dollar on anyone but a child or a pregnant woman. Currently, 14 states extend SCHIP coverage to adults and four of those states cover more adults than children in their programs.

We can all agree that we must take proactive steps to address the number of uninsured adults in our country, but redirecting SCHIP away from needy kids is not the way to do it. **SCHIP is an important program that works—help me restore its integrity by cosponsoring the SCHIP Equity Act.** To become a cosponsor or for more information, contact Josh Martin at 5-7772 or [josh.martin@mail.house.gov](mailto:josh.martin@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

  
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