



September 25, 2007

The Honorable Max Baucus  
Chairman, Finance Committee  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member, Finance Committee  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Rockefeller IV  
Chairman, Health Care Subcommittee  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
Ranking Member, Health Care Subcommittee  
104 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Dingell  
Chairman, Energy and Commerce Committee  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Chairman, Health Subcommittee  
237 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of more than 3 million volunteers and 1,400 staff members of the March of Dimes Foundation, I want to extend my deepest gratitude for your leadership in developing a well crafted, bipartisan proposal to reauthorize and strengthen Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

The package now before Congress would enable states to maintain coverage for the estimated 6.6 million infants and children who rely on SCHIP for their health insurance and would permit states to increase enrollment in the program for an estimated additional 4 million children who are currently uninsured. As numerous studies have shown, being uninsured means that children are twice as likely to go without preventive care and that infants and children with serious and ongoing health problems have difficulty accessing the specialty services they require.

The Foundation also supports with enthusiasm the provision in the legislation that gives states the option to cover low income pregnant women without having to obtain a federal waiver. Providing the full spectrum of maternity coverage -- prenatal through post-partum care -- improves the likelihood that problem pregnancies can be managed successfully and that the risk of a poor birth outcome is significantly reduced.

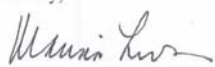
The March of Dimes applauds the bill's thoughtfully crafted section on pediatric quality measurement that addresses both inpatient and outpatient services. When fully implemented, policy makers and consumers will be able to use the information generated by these measures to evaluate program performance and to select the providers that best meet their health care needs. In short, pediatric quality measures will strengthen program accountability and simultaneously provide information essential to the improvement of health services for infants and children.

Finally, the Foundation commends the provision that grants states new flexibility to combine private insurance with CHIP. This policy will be particularly helpful in providing comprehensive coverage to

children with special health care needs whose families have access to private insurance, but who cannot afford the full cost of the family coverage premium.

The Foundation is committed to continuing to work closely with you to ensure strong bipartisan approval of this legislation by Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marina L. Weiss".

Marina L. Weiss, Ph.D.  
Senior Vice President, Public Policy  
and Government Affairs