

September 26, 2007



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

Dear Chairman Dingell:

On behalf of Merck & Co, Inc, I am writing to thank you for your leadership in reauthorizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Merck shares your goal of ensuring low-income children in this country have access to affordable health insurance. In addition to discovering innovative medicines and vaccines, Merck has long invested in patient assistance programs and philanthropic efforts that aid those throughout the globe who cannot afford access to our medicines.

Merck supports your efforts to reauthorize the current SCHIP program for America's neediest children. We applaud efforts to increase enrollment for program-eligible kids and reduce health disparities among the nation's children. Merck believes premium assistance options for SCHIP programs that allow states to subsidize employer sponsored coverage for children of working families is an innovative idea to strengthen the nation's private insurance market and ensure kids receive the best possible care. Finally, we support Congressional efforts that encourage preventive health measures in key chronic disease areas such as diabetes and obesity because we believe these efforts are crucial steps in reducing the nation's overall health care costs.

Once again, Merck believes that the reauthorization of the SCHIP program takes a positive step toward improving health care access in the United States. We hope that you continue to support these access goals now and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Victoria Blatter".

Victoria Blatter