



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

1090 Vermont Avenue NW, Suite 510, Washington D.C. 20005 ph 202 414 0140 | 800 962 9008

September 25, 2007

Dear Representative:

Since the start of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) has been a legislative priority of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and its members. The AOA expressed support upon introduction of both the House approved "Children's Health and Medicare Protection (CHAMP) Act of 2007" and the Senate approved "Children's Health Insurance Reauthorization Act."

SCHIP reauthorization provides Congress an unprecedented opportunity to invest in our country's health by ensuring that all children have access to care for both prevention and wellness. This investment will yield generations of healthier adults, improved quality of life, and long-term health care savings. Additionally, we applaud the inclusion of provisions that would raise Federal taxes on tobacco. As a physician organization, we are pleased that the compromise bill takes significant steps toward reducing tobacco use—especially smoking.

The AOA is deeply disappointed that the compromise legislation does not include the Medicare provisions included in the original CHAMP Act. While we appreciate reassurances that the Medicare physician payment issue will be addressed at a later date, we believe a prime opportunity to address this issue is being missed. Medicare legislation developed this fall must ensure that, at minimum, the House approved provisions related to physician payment are met.

Regardless of the decision to omit the important Medicare provisions, I write to encourage your support for the SCHIP reauthorization package agreed upon by the House and Senate. This legislation takes appropriate steps towards providing millions of children with increased access to health care services, thus improving the overall health of our nation. On behalf of the 61,000 osteopathic physicians represented by the AOA, I ask that you support this legislation when it is considered by the House.

Sincerely,

Peter B. Ajluni, DO  
President