



For Immediate Release
September 13, 2007

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FINANCE LEADERS ASK HHS TO RELEASE STUDIES ON CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Baucus, Grassley call for information on outstanding reviews of vital program for kids

Washington, DC - Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Republican Member Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) are calling on the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to release information on a number of Congressionally-mandated and other evaluations of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) which appear to be either completed or pending with HHS. CHIP provides health coverage to children whose parents do not qualify for Medicaid, but cannot afford private insurance. Baucus and Grassley are leading efforts to renew and improve the Children's Health Insurance Program. Its authorization expires on September 30.

“Accurate, unpoliticized information about the Children's Health Insurance Program can help Congress in its current effort to get health care to millions of children in America's working families,” said Baucus. **“Studies requested by Congress, as well as other taxpayer-funded information, should be provided to Congress in a timely fashion, and so we're asking for a progress report from the Secretary now.”**

Grassley said, **“Congress is in the middle of working to re-authorize CHIP. To make the best possible policy decisions, lawmakers need access to all relevant information about this program, especially from the agency that administers it.”**

The text of the senators' September 11 letter to HHS follows here.

September 11, 2007

Via Electronic Transmission

The Honorable Michael O. Leavitt
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Leavitt:

As you know, reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) continues to be a priority for Congress. As we work to finalize legislation to send to the President, we continue to be interested in how the decade-old program is working.

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Your Department has performed, or contracted to have performed, many evaluations and studies of CHIP and its effects over the past decade. Some were even mandated by Congress. The information in these reports has been helpful during our discussions about reauthorization of CHIP.

We know the Department has taken great interest in providing information on the CHIP program as Congress debates reauthorization. To the extent that HHS has outstanding research projects that provide additional insights into how the CHIP program is working, we would hope the Administration would be forthcoming with such information immediately. We are writing to ask you to identify all contracts and other agreements or arrangements your Department or any of its agencies has entered into with any outside entity to evaluate, study or analyze in any way how the CHIP program works.

We have particular interest in any contracts or agreements the Department or any of its agencies has with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Mathematica). Mathematica conducted the congressionally-mandated evaluations of CHIP, and the HHS website indicates that Mathematica is performing additional CHIP evaluations and will deliver additional reports.

Please identify for and provide to the Committee copies of all contracts the Department or any of its agencies has with Mathematica related to CHIP evaluations or analysis. Please also identify all deliverables due under each contract, including the type of deliverable, its content and the due date, and provide the current status for each one. For deliverables that are written products, please be sure to provide the date of every draft and final version as well as copies of the initial draft and final version submitted by Mathematica. Please make sure the Committee receives this information by Monday, September 17th.

If the Department or any of its agencies has contracted with an entity other than Mathematica related to CHIP evaluation or analysis, please provide to the Committee the same information requested above for each other contractor by Monday, September 24th.

We know you join us in a strong desire to provide America's children access to health care. We thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. Please have your staff direct any questions to [Finance staff].

Sincerely,

Max Baucus
Chairman

Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member

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