

# **BUSH LEGACY:** **MILLIONS OF CHILDREN DENIED HEALTH INSURANCE**

## *House to Vote on Extending SCHIP, Obama Expected to Sign Vital Children's Health Plan*

In accepting the Republican Party's nomination for President in 2004, President Bush vowed to provide health insurance to millions of American children. In 2007, the President ignored his promise and **TWICE VETOED** the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) which would have ensured access to health care for our nation's neediest children.

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### **The Rhetoric:**

*"America's children must also have a healthy start in life. In a new term, we will lead an aggressive effort to enroll millions of poor children who are eligible but not signed up for the government's health insurance programs. We will not allow a lack of attention or information to stand between these children and the health care they need." - President George W. Bush, [9/2/04](#)*

### **The Reality:**

*"Over the past several months, Democrats and Republicans in Congress have negotiated a bipartisan extension of the highly successful children's health insurance program. ...President Bush - in the face of bipartisan majorities in Congress, and contrary to the will of the American people - vetoed our bipartisan bill." - House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, [10/7/07](#)*

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Now, more than a year later and at a time of extraordinary economic crisis, more children are in need of health care than when President Bush first vetoed the plan. More than 2.6 million American jobs were lost last year, limiting access to employer-based health insurance, and even more families are struggling to afford skyrocketing health care costs. With the country in the midst of a recession, providing health insurance for low-income children is more vital than ever.

### ***Providing health coverage for 11 million children is the right thing to do.***

This week, the House of Representatives will vote on this popular and bipartisan-supported program, a move that would provide health insurance to some 4 million low-income children who are eligible for the program but not yet enrolled. With this legislation, SCHIP would cover more than 11 million American children. With growing unemployment and an economic crisis, the need to move quickly to extend SCHIP to reach more low-income children is clear.

### **The SCHIP bill...**

- Would extend health coverage to some 4 million low-income children who are eligible for the program but not yet enrolled, providing health insurance to more than 11 million children.
- Makes it easier for parents to seek preventive care for their children, lowering healthcare costs overall by replacing emergency room care with access to critical health services.
- Gives states permission to waive an arbitrary waiting period of five years to enroll immigrant children who are in America legally. This provision does not allow federal funds to support benefits for individuals who are not lawfully residing in the United States.