Children’s Dental Health Project Endorses KIDS Act of 2017 - S. 1827

As of October 1, federal funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) has expired, putting at risk affordable, comprehensive health and dental coverage for the nearly 9 million children that currently benefit from the program. Despite repeated calls for action by the children’s health and oral health communities in recent months, Congress has allowed CHIP to go over its funding cliff. Given the importance of CHIP to the long-term success of American children and the lack of comparable alternatives for families whom CHIP provides stable access to oral health care, the Children’s Dental Health Project (CDHP) calls on Congress to pass the KIDS Act of 2017 (S. 1827) without delay.

CHIP has enjoyed bipartisan support since its inception—and for good reason. CHIP provides comprehensive coverage, including dental, for children from families who do not qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford private insurance options for their children. In 2016, more than 1 in 8 children in the U.S. were covered by CHIP. CDHP was founded in order to establish dental coverage as a core component of every state CHIP program.

Congress must continue the promise of good oral health for America’s children and families by extending funding for CHIP in the same bipartisan spirit through which it was created. CDHP applauds Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Ron Wyden for taking the first step by introducing the KIDS Act of 2017, and we urge their colleagues to protect children’s access to oral health by sending this bill to the House and the President’s desk as soon as possible.