Calling Your Members of Congress about the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

*Updated November 2017*

**Background:** The Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides medical and dental coverage for nearly 9 million U.S. children. Congress let its federal funding expire on September 30, 2017. Since this lapse in funding, several state programs have been exploring contingency plans to freeze enrollment and/or shut down, jeopardizing CHIP coverage for children and families. It is more critical than ever that you contact your members of Congress to express your support for CHIP and urge them to extend federal CHIP funding for 5 years.

**Make a plan to call:** Plan to call your U.S. Representative as well as your two U.S. Senators. You’ll want to call during the work day (typically 9 am to 5:30 pm ET) so you can reach a staff person. If you cannot reach a staffer, leave a voicemail. Here is where to find phone numbers for your members of the [House](#) and for your two [senators](#).

**Draft a message or notes to guide you:** Below is a sample message to get you started. Be prepared to give your name and full address:

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Hi, my name is __________________ and I live in _____________.

I am calling to voice my concerns about the loss of funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program, or CHIP.

On September 30, federal funding for CHIP expired. If Congress continues to let this funding lapse, nearly 9 million children nationwide will remain at risk of losing coverage. Allowing CHIP funding to run out is irresponsible as thousands of children in our state will be in danger of losing access to the health and dental care that allow them to learn and thrive.

I am particularly concerned about the oral health needs of my community. Without CHIP, these children may have no affordable option for dental coverage. I urge you to act to extend CHIP funding for five years, as soon as possible, to ensure that no family is left without the coverage they need to be healthy.

(You could comment on how many children in your state benefit from CHIP.

OR

If you’d like to share a personal comment or brief story — either about CHIPs impact on you, your community, or your patients— this is a good time to tell it.)

I’m counting on the [representative OR senator] to do the right thing: stand up for CHIP and preserve affordable oral health coverage in my community and across the country.

Thank you.
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