



**American Hospital
Association**

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United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association (AHA) and our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems, and other health care organizations, and our 37,000 individual members, I am writing to express our strong support for the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007.

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) has been instrumental in providing health care coverage to more than 6 million low-income children. This legislation will secure coverage for those children currently covered by the program and add coverage to approximately four million more uninsured children, most of whom are eligible for Medicaid or SCHIP but not enrolled. The restructuring of the state allotments, along with the increased funding amounts, will provide states with the ability to cover more children while preventing the shortfalls that have recently plagued the program.

We support increasing the federal tax on tobacco to fund the program's renewal. We also appreciate the inclusion of provisions to extend optional coverage to pregnant women and to improve coverage of dental and mental health benefits for children.

Thank you for your interest in improving the SCHIP program and providing uninsured, low-income children with the health care coverage they need and deserve. We look forward to working with you to ensure passage of the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007.

Sincerely,

Rich Umbdenstock
President and Chief Executive Officer

