



October 2, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden  
Chairman  
House Energy and Commerce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
House Energy and Commerce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Pallone:

Subject: Extension of Children's Health Insurance Program

As an organization dedicated to ensuring access to high-quality health care for children, we urge you to quickly pass legislation extending funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). **Urgent action** is necessary to provide certainty for families and state budgets.

CHIP is critical to the health of nearly 9 million children—and together with Medicaid—has helped us reach a [historic 95.5% insured rate](#) for children nationally. In Michigan, CHIP covers nearly 120,000 children and has contributed to an insured rate of 97.1%.

As you know, federal funding for CHIP **expired on September 30**. In July, the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) estimated that four states including the District of Columbia would run out of funds by December. However, a recent Kaiser Family Foundation study estimated that at least ten states would run out by the end of this year. Minnesota's Department of Human Services released its own analysis showing that it will run out of funds in September rather than later in the year as noted in earlier reports.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation study, Michigan is expected to exhaust CHIP funds during the first quarter of 2018. Without Congress's swift action, states face great uncertainty and would need to begin winding down the program leaving children without access to needed health care.

CHIP is vital to the health of Michigan children because it gives them access to the health services they need and deserve. Children are not little adults and have their own unique set of health care needs. CHIP ensures those needs are met by providing a benefit package that is age appropriate and delivered by a network of pediatric providers. These benefits include access to preventive care. Ensuring that children have access to preventive care is good practice, which makes sure that we get children on a lifelong pathway of good health. Research shows that investing in children now is an investment in our future. Healthy children are ready to learn and succeed, growing into productive community members. CHIP is an important tool in that all children have an equitable opportunity to become healthy, productive members of our communities. Finally, as Medicaid and CHIP work

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Honorables Greg Walden and Frank Pallone

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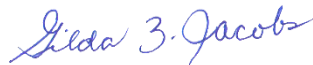
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together to keep kids healthy they also shield families from medical debt and from having to make choices between rent, food and prescriptions.

During the height of the Flint water crisis, Michigan expanded health coverage to vulnerable children through CHIP. This allows more families to access the doctors, nurses, and care they need to combat the harmful effects of lead poisoning.

We urge you to quickly pass a clean extension of CHIP and continue the bipartisan commitment to this successful program. Like [MACPAC](#) and the [National Governors Association](#), we encourage the committee to provide a five-year extension of funding at the current enhanced match. We further urge you to address funding for other important health programs—like community health centers and Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting services—whose funding also expired on September 30.

Sincerely,



Gilda Z. Jacobs  
President/CEO