



## **Say YES to children!**

### **Key recess messages**

(1) As our children head back to school, Congress must help make sure that young people have the health coverage they need to succeed. Congress can do this by passing a strong \$50 billion SCHIP reauthorization. Six million children rely on SCHIP and another five million uninsured low-income children would be covered by new funding. These are God's children – they need our support.

(2) As people of faith, we will not tolerate politicians playing politics with our children. We are all judged by how we treat the least among us, especially innocent children. SCHIP has been a great success with strong bi-partisan support since it began. The faith community expects Congress and the President to say YES to covering our children before SCHIP ends on September 30.



# Say YES to children!

## Responses to false and misleading claims

**They say:** The House bill cuts Medicare benefits for seniors to fund children's health

**We say:** The House bill strengthens Medicare by reducing overpayments to insurance companies, which is why it is supported by the AARP, the nation's leading advocate for seniors, and many other seniors' organizations throughout the country. The House bill eliminates windfalls to insurance companies while significantly improving the program for all participants, a win-win for America's children and seniors.

**They say:** The House bill expands health coverage to children in families earning \$80,000.

**We say:** The bill sends needed dollars to states to cover 5 million low-income children. As private insurance has gotten more expensive, one state – New York – with very high living costs has decided to offer subsidized coverage to uninsured children in higher income families. However, more than 9 of 10 children in SCHIP are in low-income families of 4 earning less than \$41,000.

**They say:** The bill allows illegal aliens to get government-funded health care.

**We say:** This is quite simply a false and misleading claim. Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for insurance benefits under SCHIP or Medicaid. Neither the House nor Senate bill changes this policy.

The House bill gives states the option to provide coverage to legally documented immigrant children, a change that is widely supported by local and state officials from both parties.

The House and Senate bills give states more flexibility in how they determine citizenship. This fixes a problem that has kept tens of thousands of U.S. citizens from obtaining coverage. This change removes a barrier to eligible children, but does not open SCHIP or Medicaid to undocumented children.

**They say:** This is a vast expansion of government health care, paving the way to socialized medicine.

**We say:** This is about living up to our commitment to this nation's children and reducing the number of uninsured children from 9 million to 4 million – something we can all be proud of. Families understand that it is getting harder to obtain affordable coverage for



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their children. SCHIP has functioned successfully over the past ten years, reducing the number of uninsured children by one-third without disrupting the health care system. SCHIP provides families with a way to cover children who would otherwise be uninsured and it uses a program that is administered through private insurance contractors, not government agencies.

**They say:** An increase in the federal tobacco tax hurts low-income people

**We say:** Tobacco taxes are a proven deterrent to youth smoking. Raising the federal tobacco tax will save the lives of tens of thousands of people, while saving all of us billions in unneeded medical costs. Congress used tobacco tax revenue to create SCHIP in 1997 and should use it again to strengthen the program.