

**SSWAA ACTION ALERT**

**SUPPORT EXTENSION OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM (CHIP)**

**Background:** The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) expired on September 30th. CHIP covers low-income kids whose families make too much to qualify for Medicaid, but also aren't covered by employer benefits. If Congress does not act quickly to extend funding for CHIP, schools will not be able to provide critical health services to low-income children that ensure they are healthy enough to learn.

More than half the nearly nine million children served by CHIP are eligible to receive services in school through their state Medicaid programs. Fifteen states exclusively use CHIP funds to extend their Medicaid programs, meaning all children who qualify for CHIP receive identical services and benefits as Medicaid-eligible children. In most other states a substantial portion of children served by CHIP receive Medicaid services and benefits protections. This funding stream is critical to ensuring that healthcare services can be delivered to eligible students in the school building.

The House and Senate committees that deal with health insurance have passed similar bills, but they need to get one compromise bill to send to the president NOW! This is a bipartisan issue!

1. **Take action NOW to keep critical CHIP coverage for children! PLEASE BE SURE TO CALL TODAY!**
* **Call your Senators and Representative\*** and urge them to support extension of the CHIP program: Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121.
* \*If you don't know your senators and/or representative, go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and put in your zip code.
1. Ask for the staff person who handles Health issues...or give this message to the receptionist who answers the phone:
* As a constituent and a school social worker (student/professor/administrator, etc.) in (School District, university, etc.), I support the immediate extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which ensures low-income children are healthy enough to learn by covering basic health screening, immunizations and many other critical health services.
* More than half the nearly nine million children served by CHIP are eligible to receive services in school through their state Medicaid programs, and school districts depend on CHIP to finance many of these services.
* INSERT YOUR PERSONAL MESSAGE!
* Please support the bipartisan bill to extend the CHIP program for five years in your chamber.