



TAKE ACTION!!

January 13, 2009

Call Your Senator: Urge Support and Improvements to Children's Health Bill (SCHIP)

TAKE ACTION NOW! Call your senators about the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and urge them to support:

- increased funding to reduce the number of uninsured children by nearly half, maintaining and expanding coverage, reducing enrollment barriers, and expanding outreach;
- provisions in the legislation allowing states to interpret the word "child" to include the period from conception to birth;
- coverage for legal immigrant children and legal immigrant pregnant women.

WHY IS THIS ACTION IMPORTANT NOW? More than 9 million children in our country are uninsured. Through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), states receive federal funds to provide health insurance for millions of low-income children throughout the United States. Today the U.S. House of Representatives is voting on an expansion of SCHIP. The Senate vote will take place in the next few days. This is an important opportunity to promote several key improvements to the program—coverage of currently uninsured children, coverage of children before birth, and coverage of legal immigrant children and legal immigrant pregnant women.

WHAT DOES THIS ISSUE HAVE TO DO WITH MY FAITH?

Catholic teaching tells us that everyone has "the right to live" as well as "the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services" (*Pope John XXIII, Pacem in Terris, #11*).

Catholic teaching affirms the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death and the inherent dignity of every human being. We insist that access to adequate health care is a basic human right, necessary for the development and maintenance of life and for the ability of human beings to realize the fullness of their dignity. A just society protects and promotes fundamental human rights and dignity, with special attention to the basic needs of children and the vulnerable, including the need for safe and affordable health care for all.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Contact your Senators now to urge support and improvements to SCHIP. Call the Capitol Switchboard at (202)224-3121 or find your Senators' contact information at www.congress.org.

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