

**AAP Headquarters**

141 Northwest Point Blvd
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098
Phone: 847/434-4000
Fax: 847/434-8000
E-mail: kidsdocs@aap.org
www.aap.org

Reply to**Department of Federal Affairs**

Homer Building, Suite 400 N
601 13th St NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202/347-8600
Fax: 202/393-6137
E-mail: kids1st@aap.org

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July 24, 2006

The Honorable Fortney H. "Pete" Stark
239 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0513

Dear Representative Stark:

On behalf of the 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I write today to endorse the AmeriCare Health Care Act of 2006. As the lead sponsor of Medikids, we have been pleased to work with you in a joint effort towards providing all children with the quality health insurance they deserve. We commend you for your efforts.

Children need coverage like that provided in Medikids. There are over eight million uninsured children in the United States, and they are 10 times as likely to go without the health care they need as those with insurance. Uninsured children who have asthma, for instance, are 75 percent less likely to see a physician when they need to than those with insurance.

Additionally, children would benefit from the passage of Americare. Simply put, insurance for other family members improves a child's chance at a healthy life. Astoundingly, children born into an uninsured household in the United States are 50 percent more likely to die before their first birthday (2005 United Nations Human Development Report). Clearly, a child's health is impacted by the health of his or her family.

The introduction of AmeriCare is another important step in furtherance of the goal of universal coverage for children and improvement in their health status. We look forward to advancing children's health coverage as the legislative process further refines the general ideas contained in AmeriCare.

Sincerely,

Eileen M. Ouellette, M.D., J.D. FAAP

Eileen M. Ouellette, MD, JD, FAAP
President