



ADULTS IN THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Children make up 91 percent of those covered for health care under the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).¹ Since CHIP's creation in 1997, the percentage of low-income children without health insurance has dropped by one-third.²

Presidential waivers allowed about 700,000 low-income adults, parents, and pregnant women to receive SCHIP coverage in 2006. America's Governors say they've been encouraged by both the Clinton and Bush administrations to expand SCHIP.³ The White House has granted 24 waivers for adult coverage in 15 states since 2001. In January 2002, Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson said that "[b]y giving parents of children in the SCHIP program health insurance, we are providing quality healthcare to the whole family. This will make it easier for moms and dads to care for their children, since they themselves will have access to the care they need to stay healthy."⁴

The bipartisan agreement to renew and improve CHIP provides incentives for states to redirect policies to serve low-income children.

Adult Policy in the CHIP Renewal Package

- Currently covered childless adults will transition off CHIP. Current law prohibiting waivers to allow coverage of childless adults will remain.
- Low-income parents will transition into separate block grants. The Federal Match for services for parents covered through CHIP will be reduced. No new waivers to allow new CHIP coverage of parents will be permitted.
- States have an additional option to cover pregnant women as a state option as well as maintaining the options to cover them through a state waiver or through regulation.

¹ Congressional Research Service, Congressional Distribution Memorandum, March 2007.

² A Decade of SCHIP Experience and Issues for Reauthorization, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, January 2007

³ The New York Times. "Child Health Care Splits White House and States," February 2007.

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Press Release, Jan. 24, 2002.