

March 22, 2021

The Honorable Nanette Barragán
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tony Cárdenas
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bobby Rush
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Alcee Hastings
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Steve Cohen
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representatives Barragán, Cárdenas, Rush, Bishop, Hastings, Cohen, and Norton:

I am writing from First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan children's advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal policy and budget decisions, in support of H.R. 1791, the Children's Health Insurance Program Permanency (CHIPP) Act.

Since its enactment in 1997, CHIP provides millions of children yearly with child-specific health care such as pediatricians and children's hospitals, which sometimes go missing from typical insurance plans. Aimed at families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to afford private health insurance, CHIP is one of the most effective and affordable mechanisms for providing care to our country's kids. Yet CHIP is the only federal health insurance program that is subject to the continuous threat of expiration. In 2017, CHIP expired for over 4 months - endangering the health care of millions of children.

The CHIPP Act will prevent another lapse in the CHIP program by providing permanent funding. Not only that, it will also allow states to more easily expand eligibility up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, therefore increasing access to the program.

Making CHIP permanent will allow states to further develop and improve their programs so that children and pregnant women are provided with the best possible care. Permanency to the program will also ensure that families no longer worry that their child will lose life-saving health coverage.

It is well past time that Congress make CHIP permanent. We thank you for your leadership in introducing a bill that would protect the health coverage of millions of children, and look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Bruce Lesley
President