

# URGE YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS TO CO-SPONSOR LEGISLATION TO MAKE THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM (CHIP) PERMANENT



Did you know that the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is not permanent? This month we will seek to raise awareness about the unfair treatment of CHIP relative to other federal health insurance programs. Unlike other federal health insurance programs for the elderly, military families, and federal employees, CHIP's funding is not permanent and needs periodic reauthorization by Congress to be extended. This leaves the coverage of millions of children at the whims of Congress. We have an opportunity to remedy this by urging support and passage of H.R. 4771, the Children's Health Insurance Program Permanency (CHIPP) Act, introduced by Representative Nanette Barragán.

For over 25 years CHIP, which covers children in households that earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to afford the costs of private insurance, has provided high-quality, pediatric-focused healthcare coverage to children and pregnant women from working families. Along with Medicaid, CHIP has helped reduce the uninsured rate among children by over 60% since 1997. Unfortunately, because CHIP's funding is not permanent, CHIP has been repeatedly threatened and even left unfunded at times. Lack of consistent physical and behavioral health care can have immense negative implications for young children. Regular check-ups, vaccinations, screenings and early identification of developmental delays or chronic conditions are pivotal for addressing health concerns before they become more severe, more difficult to address, and more costly to treat.

## **Background:**

Access to affordable and comprehensive health care is essential for the well-being and future success of our nation's children. Established in 1997, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) has played a pivotal role in providing millions of children with vital health care coverage to meet their unique physical and behavioral health needs. However, the uncertain future of CHIP calls for urgent action to make it a permanent program now. In July 2023, Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA) reintroduced the Children's Health Insurance Program Permanency (CHIPP) Act for the 118th Congress. Joining Congresswoman Barragán as co-sponsors thus far are Representatives Annie Kuster (D-NH) and Steve Cohen (D-TN).

The CHIPP Act (H.R. 4771) would permanently fund CHIP and related programs that support the CHIP including: 1) ensuring CHIP continues to provide quality health care and produces improved health outcomes; 2) making resources permanently available to states to reach more eligible families and to make enrolling in coverage less burdensome; 3) strengthening state flexibility to expand CHIP coverage to more children.

# URGE YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS TO CO-SPONSOR LEGISLATION TO MAKE THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM (CHIP) PERMANENT



The CHIPP Act (H.R. 4771) is a critical first step in securing the future of children's health. CHIP has been a lifeline for millions of children, providing them with essential health care coverage (including dental and behavioral health coverage) and support. Making CHIP a permanent fixture in our health care coverage system is crucial to ensure stability, continuity of care, and the long-term health of our nation's children. By investing in their health today, we invest in a healthier and brighter future for all. Congress should pass the CHIPP Act (H.R. 4771) and protect the health of our most precious resource: **our children**.

## Take Action Now!

This month, join First Focus on Children, policy experts and other ambassadors in raising awareness with our members of Congress about the critical importance of making the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) permanent. We will specifically be urging co-sponsorship of H.R. 4771, the Children's Health Insurance Program Permanency (CHIPP) Act.

Before you contact your Representative, [check here](#) to see if they have already cosponsored the CHIPP Act (H.R. 4771).

- Please call your [Representative](#) offices and ask to speak to the aide who handles Medicaid and CHIP issues.
- Introduce yourself to the aide and let them know you are a constituent. If you get voicemail, leave a message and ask for a call back.
- Tell them that you are calling about H.R. 4771, the CHIPP Act, that was introduced by Rep. Barragán and that you hope their boss can co-sponsor it.
- Pull from the information above to share why this is important to you.
- When calling your Representative's office, let them know that they can speak to Matt Dernoga in Rep. Barragán's office for more information and to co-sponsor.
- If your Rep has already co-sponsored, simply thank the aide and consider thanking the member publicly for their leadership using social media. See [previous Action Sheet](#) for tips and don't forget to tag us on FB [@Campaign4Kids](#) or X/Twitter [@ffcampaing4kids](#).
- Thank the aide for considering your request and ask them to let you know if your member of Congress can co-sponsor the bill.
- Urge your friends, family and other like-minded individuals to join you in calling for support for the CHIPP Act or to thank your members of Congress for their co-sponsorship.