

HEALTHY KIDS ONE STOP ACT (HR 542) & SCHIP

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) was created to provide health coverage for children whose parents do not qualify for Medicaid and cannot afford private health coverage. I remain committed to ensuring low-income children have access to top-quality, affordable health care.

According to recent reports, Florida ranks 2nd in the nation for the percentage of children in the state without health insurance (19.1 percent) and 3rd for our actual number of uninsured children (approximately 800,000)¹. This data also shows that 60.7 percent of Florida's uninsured children come from families most likely to be eligible for public assistance.

While Florida's number of uninsured children is embarrassing, it is but a small snapshot of a much larger national problem. On the national level, there are approximately 9 million uninsured children with about 6 million eligible for SCHIP or Medicaid, but not enrolled.

There may be a variety of reasons eligible families do not enroll their children in Florida's SCHIP program: burdensome and lengthy paperwork, lack of program awareness or a family may never be presented with the opportunity to enroll. For this reason I introduced the Healthy Kids One Stop Act- legislation to remove barriers to families eligible to enroll in SCHIP in order to close the gap between eligible but un-enrolled children for health insurance coverage.



WHAT WOULD THE HEALTHY KIDS ONE STOP ACT (HR 542) DO?

- Gives states the option to combine or streamline the enrollment process for SCHIP coverage, based upon findings from an "Express Lane" agency that already provides some form of assistance to low-income families.
- **EXAMPLE:** A state may opt to merge the application process for the National School Lunch Program with that of SCHIP. As a result, the parent (or guardian) would not have to resupply information that has already been provided to the State.
- In addition to eligible State agencies, authorized agencies that determine eligibility for assistance under these preexisting statutes and programs would be considered qualified to serve as Express Lane agencies:
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Head Start, National School Lunch Program, Child Nutrition Act, United States Housing Act, Child Care and Development Block Grant, Homeless Assistance Act, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-determination Act.

Status of HR 542: On February 4, 2009, Congress passed and the President signed into law H.R. 2, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009. I am pleased to share that this legislation included a provision similar in nature to the Healthy Kids One Stop Act- allowing States the option to streamline the enrollment process to reach more of our Nation's eligible, but un-enrolled population.

Florida KidCare

Florida KidCare is the state's children's health insurance program for uninsured children under age 19. It includes four different parts, or programs: MediKids, Healthy Kids, Children's Medical Services and Medicaid. When you apply for the insurance, Florida KidCare will check which program your child may be eligible for based on age and family income.

For more information on KidCare, I encourage you to visit <http://www.floridakidcare.org/index.html> or call 1-888-540-5437.