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Cover the children

Our members of Congress need to make children a priority in the federal budget. One of the ways they can do this is by renewal of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) which is up for renewal this year. In Louisiana the SCHIP program is known as LACHIP. What most folks don't know is if Congress does not reauthorize SCHIP, we will no longer have LACHIP in LA.

SCHIP has to be re-authorized with an increase from the present allocation or thousands of children will have to be removed from the rolls.

Even with SCHIP, there are still 9 million children who are uninsured in our country today, including many children in our community. I think we all believe that no child should go without treatment, yet all of these children remain uncovered and the majority of them have parents who are working and still can't afford coverage for them.

The public overwhelmingly supports covering all children, as has been shown in several recent surveys. We really can't afford to not cover all children; because the money we invest helps children grow up into productive citizens.

Many states are moving to cover all children but they cannot succeed without federal support. Covering all children is possible if Congress provides adequate funding. Congress should allocate the \$10-12 billion annually needed to help states cover all children. Please let your congressman know how you feel about this.

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