

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 26, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
The United States Senate
United States Capitol Building, S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
The United States Senate
United States Capitol Building, S-221
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer,

We strongly urge you to prioritize the reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Failure to reauthorize CHIP in a timely manner will put health care coverage at risk for millions of vulnerable children and pregnant women throughout the United States.

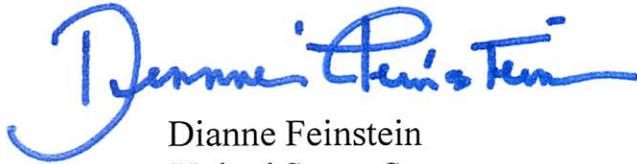
CHIP has a long history of bipartisan support since its creation in 1997. This critical program provides health coverage to nine million children and pregnant women in families with low to moderate income levels. In California, 1.3 million children are enrolled in CHIP and gain coverage through the state's Medicaid (Medi-Cal) program. In addition to the many children who are covered by the program, up to 30,000 low-income pregnant women rely on CHIP in California alone.

Despite 20 years of widespread bipartisan support, the current authorization for CHIP ended on September 30, and Congress has not yet reauthorized the program. CHIP was created to provide health insurance coverage for children whose families did not qualify for Medicaid and could not afford private insurance. This program has been instrumental in reducing the uninsured rate among children to 4.5 percent, from 13.9 percent in 1997 when CHIP was enacted.

We are greatly concerned that if Congress does not act soon, health care coverage for low-income children and pregnant women will be jeopardized. Our working families deserve better than this.

As days go on without the program reauthorized, more and more states will be faced with difficult budget decisions and vulnerable children and pregnant women could lose their coverage. Please work to protect low-income families and reauthorize CHIP without delay.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator