



KEEP RIDER TO USE FEDERAL RECOVERY FUNDS FOR 12-MONTH CHILDREN'S MEDICAID IN 2010-2011 BUDGET, NO COST TO THE BILL

Conferees deciding the final form of the Texas state budget for 2010-2011 (SB 1) must decide whether or not to keep alive House Rider 52 in Article II, Special Provisions Relating to all HHS agencies, which funds 12-month children's Medicaid only in 2010-2011, while additional Medicaid funding is available from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

There is no additional GR cost to the budget from this rider, because it will be triggered only by an increase in federal Recovery Medicaid funding above the matching rate assumed by the Legislative Budget Board in SB 1 (for details, see www.cphp.org/files/3/390_MedicaidCHIP.pdf). Texas should take this one-time chance to use federal economic recovery funds to improve children's health outcomes, while providing a huge shot in the arm to our ham-strung public benefits enrollment system. Reducing HHSC eligibility staff's workload will free them to meet the increased demand for help during this recession—help for children, seniors, Texans with disabilities, and families who need food assistance.

What You Can Do: Call or visit the Lieutenant Governor (toll free, 1-866-934-2619), and the members of the Conference Committee on SB 1, the state budget for 2010-2011.

Senate Conferees

- Chairman Steve Ogden (1-877-427-9286),
- Senators Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, Florence Shapiro; Royce West; Tommy Williams.

www.legis.state.tx.us/Members/Members.aspx?Chamber=S

House Conferees

- Chairman Jim Pitts (1-888-214-0504)
- Representatives Richard Raymond, Ruth Jones McClendon, John Otto, John Zerwas.

www.legis.state.tx.us/Members/Members.aspx?Chamber=H

Also, please join us for a rally on the South Steps of the State Capitol Monday, May 11 at noon to support 12-month Children's Medicaid.

12-Month Enrollment: 2001 Texas Law Gutted in 2003

The legislature voted in 2001 (Senate Bill 43, Zaffirini) to extend 12-month coverage to children's Medicaid by phasing in 6-month continuous enrollment in January 2002, with 12-month coverage set to begin in September 2003. In 2003, with a multibillion-dollar state revenue drop projected, the legislature postponed the phase-in of 12-month coverage until 2005, and in 2005 legislators voted to set both CHIP and children's Medicaid at 6 months (i.e., eliminating the planned phase-in). In 2007, the legislature restored 12-month coverage for CHIP, but not for children's Medicaid.

Year-long coverage improves health outcomes and is the best way to reach the poorest uninsured kids

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC, the agency in charge of Medicaid and CHIP) projects 12-month coverage will add 376,000 children to Medicaid by 2011, which would cut the number of uninsured Texas children (about 1.5 million today) by one-fourth. The Legislative Budget Board (LBB), which sets the official “score” and costs of proposed laws, projects a lower number: more than 258,000 children added by 2011. To put this in perspective: Medicaid covers almost 1.9 million Texas children on any given day, and CHIP covers about 456,000. An estimated 1.5 million children in Texas lacked insurance in 2007—more than 20 percent of Texas’ children—and of these uninsured Texas kids, 700,000 to 800,000 could be enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP, but are not. An estimated two-thirds to three-fourths of these children qualify for Medicaid, and not CHIP.

More background at: www.cppp.org/files/3/376_12_month_Medicaid.pdf

To learn more, sign up for e-mails, or make a donation, go to www.cppp.org.

The Center for Public Policy Priorities is a nonpartisan, nonprofit policy institute committed to improving public policies to better the economic and social conditions of low- and moderate-income Texans.