CHIP: A Bipartisan Success Story

The Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) plays a critical role in the coverage landscape for children. Together, CHIP and Medicaid provide health care coverage to more than 46 million children. Medicaid provides coverage for 37 million children, and CHIP builds on that foundation to provide coverage for over 9 million children who are not eligible for Medicaid, but lack access to affordable health coverage.

- CHIP was created in 1997 with strong bipartisan support to provide coverage for children who fell above Medicaid eligibility levels but lacked access to other options. CHIP was specifically designed to include child appropriate benefits, access to pediatric providers, and cost-sharing limits to protect children and families.

- Healthy children grow up to become healthy adults, and CHIP helps children reach their full potential. CHIP, together with Medicaid, has dramatically lowered the rate of uninsured U.S. children, with 95 percent of all children insured. If CHIP had not been extended in 2018, many CHIP-enrolled children could have lost coverage, threatening our nation’s historic gains in insuring children over the past two decades.

Congress Acted to Provide Long-term Stability to CHIP

- On Jan. 22, 2018, Congress passed a six-year CHIP extension. The extension passed with bipartisan support and retained important policies currently in place, including strong funding for states, vital beneficiary protections, and continued funding for the Pediatric Quality Measures program (PQMP) — the only significant federal investment in pediatric health care quality.

- On Feb. 9, 2018, Congress acted again to extend CHIP for an additional four years. This extension continued important beneficiary protections and funding for the PQMP. Beginning in 2024, states will also be required to report on the pediatric quality measures in the Child Core Set.

- Federal funding for CHIP had previously expired Oct. 1, 2017, and, prior to Congress’ action to extend the program, states were beginning to exhaust all available funds and starting to take steps to close down their programs altogether. By the time of the first extension in January, some states had already taken steps to notify families that their children’s coverage may be ending.

Children’s hospitals applaud Congress for passing a 10-year CHIP extension. This extension will provide stability for the millions of children who rely on CHIP.