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Statement by Cindy Mann, Executive Director of the Center for Children and Families at Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute
Regarding CMS's Recent August 17th Directive Announcement

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced that it will, at this time, not take compliance action under the August 17th Directive against the states that have longstanding approved SCHIP plans to cover children. This announcement provides some respite for some states, but it falls far short of the decisive action needed. The rule remains in place, and it has already been used to deny, delay and deter states from covering children whose families lack affordable private insurance options. Tens of thousands of uninsured children have lost out on coverage as a result. Moreover, other states trying to move forward to cover more children in need, as the economy worsens, have no assurance from CMS that the Bush Administration will not apply the policy to block those efforts.

States know that SCHIP and Medicaid work well in bridging the affordability gap for families trying to cover their children. That gap has been growing and with the press of higher food and gas prices, this is the time to remove, not impose coverage barriers. As a result, states are still waiting for a full rescission of the directive.

For more information view CCF's report "[Out of Touch: A Status Report on CMS's August 17th Directive](#)" or website at <http://ccf.georgetown.edu/cmsdirective>.

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