



Edward G. Rendell
Governor of Pennsylvania
Chair

James H. Douglas
Governor of Vermont
Vice Chair

Raymond C. Scheppach
Executive Director

January 13, 2009

The Honorable Harry M. Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Reid, Senator McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Representative Boehner:

The nation's governors call on Congress and the new Administration to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) as soon as possible this year. We were encouraged by the bipartisan, bicameral efforts during the 110th Congress and believe these have laid a solid foundation for agreement on full reauthorization of the program prior to the March 31, 2009 deadline.

We recognize that the provisions of updated legislation are still being developed. At a minimum, states support increased federal funding to account for rising health care costs, population growth, and to ensure that all eligible populations, determined by each state and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), are able to have access to affordable health care. In addition to adequate, predictable funding, reauthorization also presents an important opportunity to enhance flexibilities for states that will allow improvements in health care and coverage for children.

We look forward to working with all of you to ensure that a sensible bipartisan SCHIP reauthorization can be signed into law in a timely and certain manner.

Sincerely,

Governor Edward G. Rendell

Governor James H. Douglas

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee

Governor M. Jodi Rell
Vice Chair, Health and Human Services Committee