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# Editorial: SCHIP Limits

## Shortchanging children

Wouldn't it be ironic if Gov. Rendell succeeds in expanding health coverage for working poor adults only to look back and discover that thousands of Pennsylvania children have lost their government-subsidized insurance?

> For months, that's been the looming threat posed by a Bush administration directive that limits states to lower enrollment levels in the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

> Not only was President Bush wrong to twice veto Congress' proposed \$35 billion expansion of the program last year, now he's about to increase the number of kids without health insurance.

> When the policy takes effect Aug. 19, more than 4,400 kids in Pennsylvania will lose their health coverage - along with thousands more in New Jersey and other states where governors have done the right thing by stepping in to relieve the nation's health-insurance crisis. The cutbacks would gut Rendell's progressive Cover All Kids initiative, aimed at insuring everyone under 18.

> The president argues that SCHIP should be reserved only for children in the poorest families. Bush's effort to trim the kids' insurance rolls, though, countermands the earlier go-ahead from his own administration to insure more children.


> In April, lawyers at the Government Accountability Office provided some hope that kids' coverage could be spared. The GAO said the SCHIP directive could not be implemented unless Congress approves it.

> Despite that, Bush still insists it will go through.

> Clearly, it's time to step up the fight and get this policy reversed in Congress - where even members of the president's own party support helping these kids.

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