



# Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

**Joan L. Benso**  
**President & CEO**

**116 Pine Street, Suite 430**  
**Harrisburg, PA 17050**  
**[www.papartnerships.org](http://www.papartnerships.org)**

**David W. Sweet, Esq.**  
**Board Chairman**

February 25, 2008

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
U.S. Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Specter:

The one-year anniversary of the Commonwealth's implementation of its Cover All Kids CHIP expansion is soon approaching. As you know, the expansion has made a great health care program even better. Over 168,000 children are currently enrolled.

Unfortunately, action by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) could place the health care coverage of thousands of CHIP enrollees in jeopardy. Just months after approving the use of federal funds for Pennsylvania's CHIP expansion, CMS issued a directive to states that effectively caps eligibility below Pennsylvania's CHIP eligibility levels – thereby eliminating the Commonwealth's use of federal funds to cover certain children.

Attached for your review is a brief explanation of the CMS Directive and its impact on Pennsylvania. We hope that you and your staff find the information informative and useful.

We are gravely concerned that CMS took this abrupt action. CHIP in Pennsylvania depends on two key partnerships: a public-private partnership and a state-federal partnership. The resources that the federal government provides for CHIP drive the entire program. The CMS action will harm both partnerships and the effectiveness of the program.

Congress must act now to address the harmful CMS Directive before the Commonwealth is forced to make difficult decisions about scaling back CHIP. I respectfully urge you to work with your colleagues and stop the implementation of the Directive.

Sincerely,

Joan L. Benso  
President and  
CEO