



VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

October 2, 2026

Senator Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee

Re: Request for Information, Health Coverage That Works for Everyone

The Center for Children and Families (CCF), part of the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, is an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center that conducts research, develops strategies, and offers policy solutions to support access to high-quality, comprehensive, and affordable health coverage for the nation's children and families, particularly those with low- and moderate-incomes. Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following in response to Ranking Member Wyden's request for information.

1. Addressing Coverage Losses and Rising Uninsured Rates Among Children

Data from the last U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) revealed a [troubling reversal in progress for children's health coverage](#). From 2022 to 2024, the rate of uninsured children increased from 5.1% to 6.0%, marking an 18% increase nationwide and reaching the highest rate in nearly a decade. This increase was seen across nearly all racial and ethnic groups, with American Indian/Alaska Native children (12.4%) and Hispanic/Latino children (9.7%) experiencing the highest uninsured rates. Furthermore, 22 states saw statistically significant increases in their child uninsured rates, led by Texas, Delaware, and Idaho.

In addition, according to [Georgetown CCF's enrollment tracker](#), Medicaid and CHIP enrollment for children has dropped significantly, with enrollment losses exceeding almost 2.5 million children since January 2025. Furthermore, new federal work reporting requirements and increased red tape are expected to create significant confusion and spillover effects that risk dropping eligible children and families from coverage. To protect children, federal policy must focus on strengthening continuous eligibility rules, eliminating administrative barriers, and ensuring families do not lose critical access to care. No matter their zip code, all children should have unfettered access to health care; therefore, it is essential for federal policymakers

to require states to take all steps necessary to protect children's continuous health coverage, including additional eligibility expansions and protections as needed.

2. Any Health System Reforms Must Account for the Unique Needs of Children

As Congress considers health system reforms, policy proposals must explicitly address the distinct health and developmental needs of children rather than treating them as an afterthought. Accordingly, included herein, is a copy of CCF's 2019 Future of Children's Health Coverage paper entitled [“The Questions to Ask When Assessing the Impact of Coverage Expansion Proposals on Children,”](#) outlining key considerations and questions policymakers must give serious consideration to ensure children are left better, not worse off, by any new proposals. For example, any health reform efforts must ensure children receive comprehensive, child-specific benefit coverage—such as Medicaid's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit—without cost-sharing barriers. Ultimately, any health coverage reforms should build on the success of Medicaid and CHIP and not allow children to fall through the cracks.

Sincerely,

Joan Alker
Research Professor
Executive Director

Attachment: Georgetown McCourt School of Public Policy Center for Children and Families, Future of Children's Health Coverage Series, “The Questions to Ask When Assessing the Impact of Coverage Expansion Proposals on Children” (March 2019)