An overwhelming number of Connecticut voters want to invest more in children’s health care, according to a poll released today by Connecticut Voices for Children and the New England Alliance for Children’s Health. In the poll of registered voters conducted by Lake Research Partners, 89% of respondents favored expanding the HUSKY health insurance program so that every uninsured child in Connecticut could get health care coverage. More than nine in ten residents (94%) agreed that providing preventive health care to children and avoiding costly emergency care are smart investments of taxpayer dollars.

“It is a simple idea -- we invest in children’s health care, and we get healthy children eager to learn and grow,” said Sharon Langer, Senior Policy Fellow at Connecticut Voices for Children. “If we deny health care coverage, we get unhealthy children falling behind in school and unable to become productive members of our community.”

The poll also found that 95% of respondents see children’s health care as a growing concern as fewer companies offer health coverage for their workers and families.

“Connecticut residents have a lot of empathy for uninsured families,” said Amy Rosenthal of the New England Alliance for Children’s Health. “They realize that most of us are just a pink slip away from becoming uninsured ourselves.”

“Connecticut residents have spoken loud and clear, giving state and federal legislators a mandate to expand HUSKY and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program to reach the thousands of Connecticut children who remain uninsured,” said Mary Glassman, Director of Legislative Affairs at Connecticut Voices for Children.

The poll of 400 Connecticut registered voters, funded by the Connecticut Health Foundation and the National Association of Children’s Hospitals, was conducted between January 26 and February 8 by Lake Research Partners. It found that support for children’s health care cut across party lines.

-MORE-
“Children are not born Democrats, Republicans or Independents,” said Jim Horan, Executive Director of Connecticut Association for Human Services. “This is a bipartisan issue that we can all unite around on behalf of the children of Connecticut.”

The poll is released as children’s health care emerges as a central issue for the Connecticut General Assembly and the United States Congress. In Connecticut, children are provided access to no or low-cost health coverage through HUSKY if their parents can’t afford insurance or their jobs do not offer health care benefits. There are nearly 310,000 Connecticut residents, including 221,000 children, enrolled in HUSKY as of January 2007. However, in 2005, 68,000 Connecticut children under 18 (8.2%) were uninsured for the entire year. Nationally, 8.3 million children (11.3%) were uninsured for the entire year, an increase over the previous year.

HUSKY is supported by state and federal funding. Federal funding for children in the HUSKY program is provided through the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicaid; the federal government covers 50% of the state’s HUSKY A (Medicaid) costs, and 65% of HUSKY B (SCHIP) costs. The federal law authorizing SCHIP is set to expire at the end of September. Until SCHIP is reauthorized, no new federal funds will be available as of October 2007. President Bush has proposed reducing federal funds for SCHIP, which could cut off coverage for thousands of Connecticut children.

"It is critical that we strengthen the State Children's Health Insurance Program this year," said Congressman John Larson. "There are thousands of children that benefit from SCHIP in Connecticut. We must ensure that those children and all children in America, for that matter, have adequate health care coverage, as they are our future."

To help cover more uninsured children and families, Connecticut Voices for Children recommends that the Connecticut General Assembly and Governor:

- Restore HUSKY outreach funding to help enroll children who are eligible but uninsured. Outreach funding was severely cut in 2002 and most funding has not been restored.
- Increase income eligibility limits to allow more working parents and pregnant women to get HUSKY coverage.
- Improve access to health care for HUSKY members by increasing the very low reimbursement rates for HUSKY health care providers. More competitive payment rates would encourage providers to participate in HUSKY, and make it easier for HUSKY members to get needed health care.

Connecticut Voices also called on the United States Congress to maintain adequate federal funding for SCHIP to support the expansion of HUSKY.

These recommendations find support among Connecticut voters:

- Nine in ten (90%) Connecticut residents favor investing more in outreach efforts so that eligible, uninsured children get covered.
- Nine in ten (90%) also support offering affordable coverage to low-income parents of children enrolled in HUSKY.
- Voters in Connecticut want to increase funding for HUSKY – at both federal and state levels. Seven in ten (70%) voters want Congress to increase funding to expand SCHIP. Only seven percent favors the current level of funding, which would result in dropping children from the program. At the state level, 85% favor increasing funds for HUSKY.

-MORE-
Connecticut Voices for Children is a statewide, research-based policy and advocacy organization for children and families (www.ctkidslink.org). The New England Alliance for Children's Health is a regional coalition of consumers, health care providers, business leaders, educators, interfaith organizations and advocacy groups working to ensure that all children have access to high quality healthcare. Lake Research Partners (LRP) is a national public opinion research firm with offices in Washington DC, and Oakland, CA. Research on health coverage for the uninsured is an expertise of the firm, and LRP is currently working with foundations such as the Kaiser Family Foundation, Packard Foundation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on the issue.

-END-
New Survey Shows that Connecticut Voters Want to Expand HUSKY to Cover More Uninsured Children

March 5, 2007 – A new poll, sponsored by the New England Alliance for Children’s Health¹ and funded in part by the Connecticut Health Foundation and the National Association of Children’s Hospitals, was conducted by Lake Research Partners January 26 through February 8, 2007. The survey included 400 registered voters in Connecticut, and was administered in all six New England states (reported elsewhere) for a total of 2,401 interviews.

The survey examined voters’ opinions about the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), also called HUSKY B in Connecticut. SCHIP is a focus for the 110th U.S. Congress and state legislatures this year. The original ten-year authorization for the SCHIP program expires in 2007, and a key issue will be how much funding is allocated for the program. While elected officials in Washington, DC debate funding for SCHIP, Connecticut voters are clear: they want HUSKY expanded to cover more uninsured children. Indeed, they support efforts to cover all uninsured children in their state.

These survey results reinforce research findings from other states across the country – that health care and affordable coverage is a top priority and concern among voters. During these times, it is not surprising that voters are unwilling to cut funding for a program that provides affordable coverage – especially for children – and instead want to expand health care coverage.

Key findings, a chart pack, and survey methodology can be found on the following pages.

¹ The New England Alliance for Children’s Health is a regional coalition of consumers, health care providers, business leaders, educators, interfaith organizations and advocacy groups working to ensure that all children have access to high quality healthcare.
Key Findings

- **Voters want state elected officials to be doing more about covering the uninsured.** Nine in ten (90%) Connecticut voters say health care is a very important issue for their state elected officials to work on, and 82% say officials should be doing more to make health care coverage more available. (See Figure 1)

- **Connecticut voters favor expanding HUSKY to cover all uninsured children in their state.** Nearly all (94%) say HUSKY is an important program, and 76% consider it a very important program. (See Figure 2) Nine in ten (89%) favor expanding the program to cover all uninsured children, and 69% feel this way strongly. Support crosses political parties, and large majorities of those with and without young children favor expanding the program. (See Figure 3)

- **Voters in Connecticut want to increase funding for HUSKY – at both federal and state levels.** Seven in ten (70%) voters want Congress to increase funding to expand SCHIP. (See Figure 4) Only seven percent favors the current level of funding, which would result in dropping children from the program. At the state level, 85% favor increasing funds for HUSKY. (See Figure 5)

- **Support for increasing funding stays strong even when the price tag is attached.** Nearly three quarters (73%) of Connecticut voters favor Congress increasing funding by $8 billion, even when they hear this would cost about $28 per American. (See Figure 6)

- **A large majority favors investing more in outreach efforts.** Nine in ten (90%) favor these efforts so that eligible, uninsured children get covered. (See Figure 7)

- **Connecticut voters reject the argument that there are other more important funding priorities, and they disagree that cutting taxes should take precedence over children’s health coverage.** More than seven in ten voters reject both of these arguments, including majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats, as well as voters of all income levels. (See Figure 8)

- **Voters support HUSKY because they believe that all children should have the health care they need to grow and learn.** Nearly all voters (96%) believe this – 82% strongly. Economic factors are also at play. Ninety-five percent agree that HUSKY is important with fewer employers providing coverage for workers and families. Also, 94% agree that HUSKY is a smart investment because preventative care can avoid costly emergency room visits later. (See Figure 9)

- **Connecticut voters also support offering affordable coverage to the low-income parents of children enrolled in HUSKY.** Nine in ten (90%) favor this idea, with 66% expressing strong support. (See Figure 10) Nearly six in ten (59%) also favor allowing children to keep their HUSKY coverage until age 25, if their job does not provide it.
Figure 1: State Elected Officials Should Be Doing More to Make Health Care Coverage More Available to Uninsured

Q. In your opinion, do you think state elected officials should be doing more, less, or about the same to make health care coverage more available to people in Connecticut, who cannot get coverage through their jobs or afford it on their own?

Doing more: 82%
Doing same: 10%
Doing less: 2%
DK/Refuse: 6%

Figure 2: Importance of HUSKY Program

Q. In your opinion, do you think HUSKY is a very important program, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all an important program?

Very important: 76%
Somewhat important: 18%
Not too important: 1%
Not at all important: 1%
DK/Refuse: 4%
Figure 3: Expand HUSKY to Cover All Uninsured Children

Q. State elected officials will be discussing different ideas about HUSKY this year. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following ideas: Expand the program so that every uninsured child in Connecticut can get health care coverage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favor (Total)</th>
<th>Strongly favor</th>
<th>Somewhat favor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: All Connecticut Voters</strong></td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents of Children &lt;18</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children &lt;18</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children &lt;18</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Invest More Federal Funds in SCHIP

Q. HUSKY gets much of its funding at the federal level. This year, the U.S. Congress must make decisions about the federal funding for this program. Which statement best describes your thoughts on what Congress should do:

A) Keep funding the program at the same level even though that will mean dropping children from the program because of the rising cost of health care. 7%

B) Put enough money into the program so it can continue to cover the same number of children as it does now. 18%

C) Put even more money into the program so that more of the nearly nine million uninsured children nationwide can get health coverage. 70%
Figure 5: Invest More State Funds in HUSKY

Q. Now thinking about your state government, do you favor or oppose Connecticut investing more in the HUSKY program so that it can cover more of Connecticut’s uninsured children? (Is that strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?)

![Pie chart showing responses]

- Strongly favor: 65%
- Somewhat favor: 20%
- Somewhat oppose: 5%
- Strongly oppose: 3%
- DK/Refuse: 7%

Figure 6: Increase SCHIP Funding By $8 Billion -- $28 Per American

Q. Leading child health experts estimate that we could cut the number of low-income uninsured children in America in half if the US Congress invests 8 billion dollars more per year over the next five years. This would be about $28 a year per American. Would you favor or oppose Congress increasing funding for Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program by 8 billion dollars a year for the next 5 years? Base N = 200

![Pie chart showing responses]

- Strongly favor: 51%
- Somewhat favor: 22%
- Somewhat oppose: 5%
- Strongly oppose: 10%
- DK/Refuse: 12%
Figure 7: Voters Favor Investing More in Outreach Efforts

Q. State elected officials will be discussing different ideas about HUSKY this year. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following ideas: Invest more in outreach efforts so that uninsured children who qualify for HUSKY but haven’t enrolled yet, are covered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Favor (Total)</th>
<th>Strongly favor</th>
<th>Somewhat favor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: All Connecticut Voters</strong></td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party ID</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parents of Children &lt;18</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children &lt;18</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children &lt;18</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8: Voters Reject Arguments About Other Priorities and Cutting Taxes

Q. State elected officials will be discussing different ideas about HUSKY this year. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following ideas: Cut back on the program so that funding can go toward other priorities. Q. I’d like to read reasons some people say we should not expand the program. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each reason for not expanding: Right now we need to focus on cutting taxes, not spending more on children’s health coverage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cut Back on HUSKY for Other Priorities (% Total Oppose)</th>
<th>Focus Should Be On Cutting Taxes, Not Spending More on Children’s Health Coverage (% Total Disagree)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Connecticut Voters</strong></td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<td><strong>Party ID</strong></td>
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<td>Democrats</td>
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<td>74%</td>
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<td>Independents</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Household Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than $40K</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40K to $80K</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80K or more</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Figure 9: Why Voters Want to Invest More in HUSKY

Q. Here are some reasons people say we should invest more into the program. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following reasons to invest more in HUSKY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All children should have the health care they need to grow and learn.</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With fewer companies these days providing health coverage for their workers and their families, HUSKY is especially important for making sure that children in working families can keep getting the health services they need.</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The state budget needs to be spent wisely, and investing in children’s preventive health care now, to avoid costly emergency care later, is a smart way to invest in our state’s future economy.</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Figure 10: Offering Affordable Coverage to HUSKY Parents

Q. State elected officials will be discussing different ideas about HUSKY this year. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following ideas: Allow low-income, working parents of the children enrolled in HUSKY to get affordable health coverage for themselves through the program, if their job does not offer health insurance.

Strongly favor: 66%
Somewhat favor: 24%
Somewhat oppose: 4%
Strongly oppose: 4%
DK/Refuse: 2%
Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey which was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers from January 26 through February 8, 2007. The survey was conducted among 2401 registered voters age 18 and older in New England. A total of 400 interviews were conducted in each New England state: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Telephone numbers for the survey were drawn from a random-digit-dial (RDD) sample in each state. The sample was executed in replicates, using a seven callback design. A screening question asked respondents if they were registered to vote at their current address. Only those who said “yes” were included in the survey. The data were weighted slightly by gender, age, and race to reflect their proper proportions according to the U.S. Census.

In interpreting survey results, all probability sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error; that is, the results of a survey may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. The margin of sampling error for the Connecticut survey results is ±4.9 percentage points. When looking at smaller subgroups within the sample, the margin of error will be greater. The table below represents the estimated sampling error for different percentage distributions of responses based on sample size.

**Margin of Sampling Error for Different Percentage Distributions and Different Sample Sizes**

(95% confidence)

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<td>5.9</td>
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</table>
March 5, 2007

Mary Glassman
Director of Legislative Affairs
Connecticut Voices for Children
33 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

Dear Mary:

Although I am not able to be with you in person today, I want to thank you and commend you for your partnership with the New England Alliance for Children's Health, the Connecticut Health Foundation, the National Association of Children's Hospitals, and Lake Research regarding your work concerning children’s health insurance. The information you are releasing today will be very helpful to Connecticut, New England, and the nation.

Today’s report is timely. As you know, the original authorization of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), known as HUSKY B in Connecticut, expires this year. The poll released today clearly indicates that Connecticut not only wants SCHIP to continue into the future, but wants to make sure the program is expanded to cover more uninsured children.

Since the creation of SCHIP a decade ago, Connecticut and New England have served as role models to other states in ensuring that uninsured children receive quality health coverage. Two key results from the poll find that 90% of Connecticut voters support offering affordable coverage to the low-income parents of children enrolled in HUSKY and that 73% of the poll’s participants support increased funding for the program, even though this would cost about $28 dollars per American.

These two statistics demonstrate that SCHIP is a very high priority for Connecticut. One of the joys, for me, in representing Connecticut in the United States Senate is that I am able to work on programs that have proven to benefit society. I believe the implementation of HUSKY B has exceeded all the original expectations of this critically important program.

Thank you for your outstanding work on this important poll. The information released today will serve as an excellent guide during the SCHIP debate. I look forward to working with all of you in the future to ensure that this year’s SCHIP reauthorization reflects both the immediate and future needs of Connecticut’s uninsured children and their parents.

Best regards,

[Signature]

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
United States Senator
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, March 5, 2007

CONGRESSWOMAN
Rosa L. DeLauro

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro (Conn.-3) today issued the following statement regarding findings that nearly 9 in 10 Connecticut residents support expanding Connecticut’s HUSKY children’s health insurance program to cover more uninsured children. The program is funded in part by the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which insures nearly 6 million children:

“The findings of this survey confirm what so many of us have been saying all along: that affordable children’s health care coverage is a top priority for families and that Connecticut’s HUSKY program is a runaway success,” DeLauro said. “Nothing could be more important than providing low-cost or free health coverage to more than 300,000 children, parents, and pregnant women here in Connecticut.

“But in order to keep HUSKY strong, the time has come for Congress to do its part by renewing the State Children’s Health Insurance Program, which is responsible for ensuring nearly 17,000 children in Connecticut alone. In an era in which our nation’s health care problems have become increasingly desperate, SCHIP is virtually the only success story we have, covering nearly a million more children in working families today than even President Clinton anticipated when it was created. Unfortunately, at a time when people want to see this program expanded to cover more of the 9 million uninsured children in the United States, the budget proposal President Bush sent to the Congress would result in hundreds of thousands of children losing their coverage. It takes us in precisely the wrong direction.”

“I want to thank Connecticut Voices for Children for their remarkable work bringing to light this important report and for building momentum in the grassroots for Congress to pass a strong SCHIP bill this year.”
The survey, conducted by Lake Research Partners found the following support among Connecticut voters:

- Nine in ten (90%) Connecticut residents favor investing more in outreach efforts so that eligible, uninsured children get covered.
- Nine in ten (90%) also support offering affordable coverage to low-income parents of children enrolled in HUSKY.
- Voters in Connecticut want to increase funding for HUSKY – at both federal and state levels. Seven in ten (70%) voters want Congress to increase funding to expand SCHIP. Only seven percent favors the current level of funding, which would result in dropping children from the program. At the state level, 85% favor increasing funds for HUSKY.

More information about the survey can be found at [www.ctkidslink.org](http://www.ctkidslink.org)

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[www.house.gov/delauro](http://www.house.gov/delauro)
Representative Christopher Shays’ Statement on SCHIP

I am grateful for the strong showing of support for the State Children's Health Insurance Program, which is the Healthcare for UninSured Kids and Youth (HUSKY) plan in Connecticut. The SCHIP program is a tremendous success, and I will work in Congress to ensure children continue to have this wonderful health insurance program.

In December, I joined Congressman Jim Cooper in writing to the President to urge sufficient funding to continue the SCHIP program, and in February, I joined 75 of my colleagues in writing to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee to request the same. I am hopeful that with a strong figure budgeted in the House, this program, which enjoys bipartisan support, will continue to benefit so many children.

Working poor making the transition from welfare to work often find one of the most difficult burdens is having to pay for health insurance, especially for an entire family. In the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, Congress established SCHIP to allow states to cover uninsured children in families with incomes above Medicaid eligibility levels.

In Connecticut, this was implemented as the HUSKY plan. HUSKY serves children up to age 19 with a full package of medical, dental and other health care benefits. The HUSKY Plan may be free or low-cost, depending on family size and income.

I look forward to working many of these participants here today as Congress considers how to reauthorize the SCHIP program.
Statement of Senator Lieberman in Support of HUSKY Children’s Health Insurance Program

I would like to thank Connecticut Voices for Children for inviting me to this event today. You do wonderful work on behalf of children and their families in Connecticut and we appreciate your advocacy on behalf of those who cannot advocate for themselves. I am sorry the Senate schedule prevented me from standing with my Connecticut colleagues to support our HUSKY program.

In 1997, I voted to create the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) or HUSKY in Connecticut. This year, Congress is set to reauthorize this bipartisan program. It is clear what Connecticut wants based on the poll released today. Connecticut residents want HUSKY expanded to cover the 70,000 uninsured children in our state.

This year, one of my health care priorities is to work with my Senate colleagues to bring universal coverage to children. However, in Washington, we must also stop cuts to SCHIP. The President’s SCHIP proposal is inadequate and will result in thousands of Connecticut’s children losing coverage. This is unacceptable and I will fight to not only maintain coverage for Connecticut’s children, but to expand it.

Lastly, we have learned this past year that having HUSKY does not mean that children have access to medical care. Giving children insurance cards does not mean they have access to health care. I am examining legislative options to expand and support new venues for offering treatment to children, such as school-based health centers, and to prioritize prevention and health promotion in children.

It is imperative that we secure our children’s health future now. Experts say that this may be the first generation of American children that have a lower life expectancy than their parents. We must work together across party lines to prevent disease and promote wellness starting at birth, so that this generation is the healthiest in American history.