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Health Coverage for 30,000 Los Angeles kids in Jeopardy
Failure by Senate Health Committee to Pass ABX 1 1 is a Disgrace

Los Angeles, California – On behalf of the Children's Health Initiative (CHI) of Greater Los Angeles, Howard A. Kahn, CEO of L.A. Care Health Plan and co-convenor of the CHI, issued the following statement concerning the Senate Health Committee's failure to pass health care reform legislation:

"We wish to express our crushing disappointment in the action taken by Senate Health Committee on Monday, January 28th in failing to pass the health reform bill, ABX 1 1.

"ABX 1 1 was a historic opportunity. If passed and then funded, it would have provided health coverage to millions of uninsured Californians, including all children. Now, thousands of California children, including about 30,000 in Los Angeles alone, are in danger of losing their health care coverage by May 2008.

"The CHI of Greater Los Angeles, over 50 organizations strong, has raised over \$130 million to provide health coverage to over 40,000 kids through the locally-funded Healthy Kids program. In addition, through our outreach efforts, we have enrolled over 100,000 children in Medi-Cal and Healthy Families. Recent studies by the Urban Institute show that the Healthy Kids program has resulted in improving the well-being of children and their families, and has led to a statistically significant drop in avoidable hospitalizations and school absences. Covering kids works – for kids, for families, for schools, and for society.

"We refuse to believe that the Senate, Assembly and Governor are willing to let health care reform die, and disregard the hard work of so many people, including business, labor, providers, advocates, county agencies, private foundations, and policymakers, who have been working on a health reform solution for years.

"We urge the Governor and our Legislators to continue to pursue health care reform for the thousands of children who could lose health coverage in Los Angeles and the millions of other Californians who are uninsured."

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About the Children's Health Initiative of Greater Los Angeles

The Children's Health Initiative of Greater Los Angeles (CHI) was formed over four years ago with the overarching goal to create public policies to keep kids healthy and to ensure that no child has to go without health insurance. Key financial supporters include First 5 LA, L.A. Care Health Plan, The California Endowment, and Blue Shield of California Foundation. Healthy Kids, the flagship health insurance program for the CHI, is administered exclusively by L.A. Care Health Plan. For more information, please visit www.chigla.org