



**For Immediate Release
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Governor's Blue Pencil Slashes Another \$50 Million – A Total of 1 Million Kids Expected to be Denied Health Coverage

*With Total Cut to Children's Coverage at \$178 Million, Governor Declares MRMIB Must
Move Beyond Waitlists and Start Kicking Kids Off Program at Annual Renewal*

SACRAMENTO, California — Statement from Ted Lempert, President, Children Now, on behalf of children's coverage coalition including 100% Campaign, PICO California, California Children's Health Initiatives, United Ways of California:

"Today our knife-wielding Governor made the cruelest and most illogical slash of all by making his own additional \$50 million cut to the Healthy Families Program. This brings the total cut to the Healthy Families Program to \$178 million and will deny health coverage to nearly one million children in California – potentially decimating children's health coverage in California.

"This is a far cry from the Governor who initially promised health coverage for all children in California when he ran for office. And for all those state leaders who have campaigned on children's issues and declared their support for children's health in the past, how can they claim to have saved California's health care safety net when more children than ever are being denied health coverage in all areas of the state?

"In a down economy, when families need assistance the most, our Governor and legislators have failed to make the health of children a priority. Our elected officials have instead balanced the budget on the backs of our most vulnerable population and important state asset – our children.

"This cut couldn't be worse in terms of California's economic future, which depends on healthy and well-educated kids. Ensuring opportunity for kids isn't that complicated or expensive compared to other problems we face. But the cuts to Healthy Families take us in the entirely wrong direction. Denying one million children health insurance is the most inexplicable and foolhardy decision in the whole budget deal. While the Governor continues to say the California dream is still alive, where children's health is concerned our neediest kids are facing a nightmare."

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If you would like to speak to a representative on behalf of children's health, please call Bobby Peña at 916-440-0980 or call one of the organizational representatives listed below. Contact information on next page
The 100% Campaign, a collaborative effort of The Children's Partnership, Children Now and Children's Defense Fund, was created to ensure that all of California's children obtain the health insurance they need to grow up strong and healthy. www.100percentcampaign.org

The PICO California Project is the united effort of 20 California congregation-community organizations affiliated with the PICO National Network. Collectively, we represent 350 congregations and 400,000 families statewide and are actively organizing in over 70 cities in Northern and Southern California www.picocalifornia.org

The California Children's Health Initiatives (CCHI) is a collaboration of local Children's Health Initiatives (CHIs) in 29 counties dedicated to ensuring that all California children have access to quality health care. Together, the CHIs emphasize streamlined enrollment into Healthy Families, Medi-Cal and Healthy Kids insurance programs, and share a goal of creating and maintaining a sustainable health care program for all children in California.

United Ways of California is a state association of local United Ways and is a strong advocate of expanding health coverage to more children in California. United Ways work closely with local community and business leaders, legislators, congressional members and others to promote this achievable and important goal.

Children Now

Ted Lempert, President – Contact Ronald Pineda at 510-763-2444 x119 to speak to Ted, or contact Ted directly at 510-763-2444 x155 or 650-245-8166

Wilma Chan, Vice President, Policy – 510-763-2444 x105 or 510-388-7812

Kelly Hardy, Associate Director, Health – 510-763-2444 x126

Children's Defense Fund California

Deena Lahn, Policy Director – 510-663-2984

Cliff Sarkin, Senior Program Associate – 510-663-1294

The Children's Partnership

Kristen Golden Testa, California Health Program Director – 415-505-1332

PICO California Project

Rebecca Stark, Associate Director – 916-402-5804

Jim Keddy, Director – 916-402-5802

United Ways of California

Judy Darnell, Director of Public Policy – 831-246-3099

California Children's Health Initiatives

Suzie Shupe, Executive Director – 707-527-9213