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California Children's Health Initiatives Hails President Obama's Enactment of the State Children's Health Insurance Program

*Legislation reauthorizes federal funding for states providing families
cost-effective children's health care coverage*

Los Angeles, Calif. – Amy Carta and Bonnie Ferreira, Co-Chairs of the California Children's Health Initiatives (CCHI), issued the following statement in response to President Barack Obama signing a bill reauthorizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP):

"Today, President Obama has improved the health and well-being of the children of this nation by signing the SCHIP reauthorization bill as one of his first acts as President. In doing so, he has seized a golden opportunity to aid struggling children and families throughout California and the nation during these economically trying times. Now is the time for the California Legislature to show true leadership by prioritizing children as our state's first investment. It is incumbent on both parties to make a strong and timely commitment to help expand children's health care coverage and reduce the number of uninsured kids in California.

"For nearly 12 years, SCHIP has served as the primary funding source for California's Healthy Families Program, which provides low-cost health insurance coverage to more than 900,000 children. Healthy Families ensures these children have access to the essential preventive medical and dental care they need to grow up healthy and strong. With California families grappling with rising housing costs and unemployment rates, this important program is needed now more than ever.

"As policymakers in Sacramento continue to tackle the swelling state budget deficit, we hope they will capitalize on the increased federal funding offered by this legislation to help deliver quality, affordable health care to California families with uninsured children. President Obama and our Members of Congress have made children's health care a top priority – it's time for the California Legislature to do the same. "

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About the California Children's Health Initiatives (CCHI):

The California Children's Health Initiatives (CCHI) is a collaboration of local Children's Health Initiatives (CHIs) in 30 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.