

For Immediate Release  
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Contact: Ashley Nasser  
(818) 728-3350 x352

## **Budget Agreement a Bad Deal for Kids' Coverage**

***Thousands of children to lose coverage due to budget cuts; Elected leaders urged to find a way to cover all of California's children when the Legislature reconvenes***

Los Angeles, CA – The California Children's Health Initiatives (CCHI) issued the following statement today regarding the long overdue passage of the state budget:

"We are deeply disappointed that our elected officials have chosen to pass a budget that will cause thousands of California's children to lose their health coverage. Budgets are about priorities and we can think of no greater priority than our children.

Semi-annual reporting requirements for Medi-Cal recipients and increases in Healthy Families premiums will cause our most vulnerable children and families to join the ranks of the uninsured, thus putting their long-term health and well-being at risk.

As a result of this budget, as many as 250,000 California children will no longer be able to see a doctor for preventive care, visit a dentist to prevent cavities, or get an appointment with an eye doctor so they can be fitted with glasses to aid in reading their textbooks or a chalkboard.

We know that children with health insurance live healthier lives, do better in school and grow up to become more productive adults in our society, so investing in children's coverage is not just common sense, but makes financial sense in the long run too.

While we recognize that the state's current fiscal condition required painful choices, this budget moves us in the exact opposite direction needed on children's health insurance. Children's Health Initiatives (CHIs) in 30 California counties have worked heroically to enroll children in public and locally funded health programs but we cannot sustain these efforts over the long term without funding from and partnership with the state.

On behalf of the 30 CHIs in California, the approximately 80,000 children who currently receive health insurance coverage as a result of the CHIs, and the more than 750,000 children who continue to wake up every day without health insurance, we urge our elected officials and the Governor to deliver on their pledge to cover all of California's children when the Legislature reconvenes."

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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 coverage. 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.