

**TO: Faith and Community Leaders**  
**FROM: Marian Wright Edelman**  
**RE: CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE REFORM**

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**Children Need *Real* Child Health System Reform Now! You Can Help Them Get It.**

*When we abandon our children, when a nation abandons her children, gangs will adopt them. Drug dealers will hire them and supply them. The NRA will arm them. Prisons and jails will house them. Criminals will educate them. The community will fear them rather than love them. "And we are not saved."*

--Rev. Otis Moss, Jr., CDF-Haley Farm, July 21, 2009

Your help is urgently needed to ensure that children are better rather than worse off in the final health reform legislation this year and that specific child health system reforms are enacted to overcome bureaucratic barriers and inequities that continue to deny millions of uninsured and underinsured children the health care they need. Senator John D. Rockefeller IV told the New York Times "he was unhappy that the legislation would end the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and could reduce the scope of benefits for 11 million children in the program." We share Senator Rockefeller's concerns.

We urge you to join with us in demanding that Congress enact critical child health reforms that make sure:

- that millions of children currently enrolled in CHIP do not face decreased benefits and increased costs when CHIP ends in four years and they are moved into the Exchange;
- that no children in CHIP who currently receive comprehensive Medicaid benefits in blended state programs will lose them;
- that state bureaucratic barriers are simplified so that the 6 million of the 9 million uninsured children who are now eligible for CHIP or Medicaid may actually receive care;
- that all children receive Medicaid's comprehensive child appropriate benefits; and,
- that a national safety net of 300 percent (\$66,000. for a family of four) replaces the current unjust 50 state lottery of geography that ranges from 400 percent in New York, 350 percent in New Jersey, to 200 percent in Mississippi, 185 percent in Idaho, and 150 percent in North Dakota.  
**God did not make 50 different classes of children in America and all children should have a fair chance to live and learn and thrive wherever they live.**

Representatives Bobby Scott and Bobby Rush have been the key leaders pushing these child health reforms in the House and Senator Robert Casey has been a key child health spokesperson in the Senate.

**Who you need to contact right away:**

**Please contact *immediately* your own Senators and Representatives and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, House Energy and Commerce Chair Henry Waxman, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, and Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus.** Others to be contacted are listed below. It would be helpful also if you can get as many other people as you can to do so. This is going to be a hard political struggle for the rest of the year so please **persevere, persevere, persevere**. This is one of the most important opportunities of our lifetime.

The general Congressional switchboard number for Senators or Representatives is 202-224-3121. **Please call, visit, fax/write a letter or e-mail these key leaders in the order listed. They can make real child health reform happen.**

**1. In the House of Representatives:**

*House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) 202-225-4965; fax: 202-225-5609*  
*Energy and Commerce Chair Henry Waxman (D-CA) 202-225-3976; fax: 202-225-4099*  
House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) 202-225-4131; fax: 202-225-4300  
House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC) 202-225-3315; fax: 202-225-2313  
House Education and Labor Chr. George Miller (D-CA) 202-225-2095; f: 202-225-5609  
House Ways and Means Chair Charles Rangel (D-NY) 202-225-4365; fax: 202-226-0816

**2. In the Senate:**

*Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) 202-224-354; Fax: 202-224-7327*  
*Senate Finance Chair Max Baucus (D-MT) 202-224-2651; Fax: 202-224-9412*  
Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) 202-224-21521; Fax: 202-228-0400  
Senate Finance member Kent Conrad (D-ND) 202-224-2043; Fax: 202-224-7776  
Senate Finance member Charles Grassley (R-IA) 202-224-3744; Fax: 202-224-6020  
Senate Finance member Olympia Snowe (R-ME) 202-224-5344; Fax: 202-224-1946

There is *no* excuse for Congress not to protect children first or **to claim that** there is no money. We do not have a money problem in our country. We lead the world in millionaires and billionaires and still have the largest GDP of any nation. But we do have a profound values and priorities problem.

Children are the most cost effective investment the nation can make. Insuring them costs one-third the cost of insuring working-age adults. An uninsured child costs communities \$2100 more than a child with Medicaid or CHIP. Children are the core of long term health cost containment and prevention strategies. Every dollar invested in immunizing children saves \$16 in later costs. Early detection and treatment saves billions: a timely doctor's visit for asthma is about \$100; a full blown asthma attack can cost \$7,300 in emergency room and hospitalization costs.

***Congress found hundreds of billions of dollars to line the pockets of powerful drug companies for prescription drugs for seniors; 60 billion a year to fix the alternative tax without a "pay go"; a trillion dollars to bail out the banks and investors; and, more than 80 billion for the car companies. Congress can and must find a pittance of that amount to bail out millions or babies and children facing sickness, lifelong impairments and death.***

A nation that does not stand for its children does not stand for anything and will not stand strong in the future. For more information and updates on what you can do to ensure real child health reform this year, please visit CDF's website [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org) or call 1-800-233-1200.

**(Please find attached e-mail addresses and suggested scripts for calls, e-mails and letters.)**

**Please feel free to cut and paste the enclosed letter. If you write your own message, make sure it includes that "Children's Health Reform coverage must be comprehensive, affordable, accessible to all children."**

**E-MAIL ADDRESSES:**

[waxman.staff@mail.house.gov](mailto:waxman.staff@mail.house.gov)  
[wendell.primus@mail.house.gov](mailto:wendell.primus@mail.house.gov)  
[terry.lierman@mail.house.gov](mailto:terry.lierman@mail.house.gov)  
[acacia.salatti@mail.house.gov](mailto:acacia.salatti@mail.house.gov)  
[amy.peake@mail.house.gov](mailto:amy.peake@mail.house.gov)  
<http://reid.senate.gov/contact/index.cfm>  
[rangel@mail.house.gov](mailto:rangel@mail.house.gov)  
[max@baucus.senate.gov](mailto:max@baucus.senate.gov)  
<http://durbin.senate.gov/contact.cfm>  
[senator@conrad.senate.gov](mailto:senator@conrad.senate.gov)

(Pelosi's Senior Policy Advisor)  
(Steny Hoyer's Legislative Director)  
(James Clyburn's Health Legislative Assistant)  
(George Miller's Health Legislative Assistant)  
(Link to Harry Reid's webpage)  
(Charles Rangel's general e-mail)  
(Max Baucus' general e-mail)  
(Link to Dick Durbin's webpage)  
(Kent Conrad's general e-mail)

**SAMPLE LETTER, E-MAIL OR PHONE MESSAGE.**  
**PRIORITY: Pelosi, Waxman, Miller, Baucus**  
**The Goal is at least 100 calls per day.**

Dear Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a constituent living in \_\_\_\_\_.

**Children need your help! I am writing on behalf of the 9 million uninsured and underinsured children who cannot speak, vote or advocate for themselves and the 6 million children presently enrolled in CHIP which will end in four years putting them in danger of being worse off because of weak benefits and higher cost-sharing than before the Health Reform Legislation.**

**I urge you to support Children's Health Care Reform Legislation that ensures for all children comprehensive, affordable, accessible health care and equal coverage no matter where they live.**

**Congress now has the opportunity as well as the moral obligation to step forward and provide insurance coverage for every child. I am counting on you.**

Sincerely,

Name, title  
Address, phone number