

## Eshoo Votes to Override President's Veto of Children's Health Insurance Bill

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, voted to override the President's veto of H.R. 976, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization Act of 2007." The House vote of 273 to 156 fell 13 votes short of the two-thirds required to override the veto. Eshoo made the following statement during the debate.

"Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this effort to override the President's veto of H.R. 976, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization bill.

"Virtually everyone with a stake in public health and healthcare is calling for this bill to be passed. There are 270 groups supporting this bill: 43 Republican and Democratic governors, including Governor Schwarzenegger, the American Medical Association, AARP, America's Health Insurance Plans, the Healthcare Leadership Council, and Catholic Charities, among others.

"There are at least 10 million reasons to insure the children of our nation because 10 million children don't have healthcare coverage today.

"The bill provides dental care, mental health benefits, and other medically necessary benefits that are part of the program.

"The bill provides coverage to expectant mothers.

"The bill allows states to provide assistance for CHIP-eligible kids to secure private insurance through a parent's employer-sponsored coverage.

"The bill is fully funded by a 61-cent per pack increase in the tax on cigarettes.

"The opponents of this bill are hiding behind the thinnest arguments.

"They say there are only 500,000 uninsured kids who are eligible for CHIP that we need to enroll. This is incorrect. According to the Urban Institute, there are more than 6.6 million low-income children who qualify for CHIP but are yet to be enrolled. This bill provides states with the resources and incentives to ensure these kids get the coverage they're eligible for.

"The President says the program will cover children in families with incomes of up to \$83,000 a year. Senator Grassley, the Ranking Republican on the Senate Finance Committee, disputes this charge, saying 'the president has been served wrong information about what our bill will do.' In fact, the bill provides incentives for states to enroll children below 200% of poverty and any state that chooses to provide more generous coverage must get approval from the Administration.

"Opponents assert that the bill increases taxes on 'working people.' The truth is it increases taxes on smokers. Not only does this help pay for the program, but according to the Institute of Medicine, by increasing the tobacco tax, there will be a decrease in tobacco use, particularly among young people.

"Opponents assert the bill will cover adults not children. Although the program has been used to cover adults in the past, this practice will be phased out over the next two years.

"Opponents assert that the bill gives coverage to undocumented aliens. There is nothing in the bill that would provide such coverage. In fact, the bill says, 'nothing in this act allows federal payment for individuals who are not legal residents.'

"The moment has arrived for the House of Representatives to override the President's veto of the Children's Health Insurance Program, and when we do, we will stand next to the children and on the side of a brighter future for them and our entire country."

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