

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) voted again today to provide health care to 11 million children nationwide, including the nearly 651,853 children enrolled in New York's Child Health Plus (CHPlus) Program, sending the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorization to the President's desk.

"As a father, I know the worry parents face when a child gets sick and how critical health insurance is to ensure preventative care," **said Arcuri**. "I know first hand that a healthy child is better prepared for learning and success. In these hard economic times, more and more American parents are having difficulty finding affordable health insurance for their children and the need for this bill is more critical than ever."

Today, the House of Representatives sent, with Arcuri's strong support, the bipartisan State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorization Act (H.R. 2), with Senate amendments, to President Obama, who is expected to sign it into law.

H.R 2 provides health care coverage for 11 million children by preserving coverage for the over 7 million children currently covered by SCHIP and extending coverage to 4.1 million uninsured children who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in, SCHIP and Medicaid. In New York, there are 267, 000 children currently eligible, but uninsured, who will gain health insurance under this bill.

H.R. 2 also improves SCHIP benefits by ensuring dental coverage and mental health parity. Under the legislation, dental coverage will now be provided to all children enrolled in SCHIP. It also ensures that states will offer mental health services on par with medical and surgical benefits covered under SCHIP.

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorization bill is fully paid for and would not increase the national deficit. It also requires, for the first time, that SCHIP programs comply with the citizenship and identity documentation requirements in Medicaid, explicitly reaffirming that nothing in the act allows for payments for individuals who are not legal U.S. residents.

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