

Murphy, Connecticut Children's Medical Center Officials Celebrate One Year Anniversary of Landmark Health Insurance for Kids Law

Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) and representatives from Connecticut Children's Medical Center gathered in Hartford to celebrate the one year anniversary of President Obama signing the expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) into law.

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HARTFORD - Today, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) and representatives from Connecticut Children's Medical Center gathered in Hartford to celebrate the one year anniversary of President Obama signing the expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) into law. In Connecticut, SCHIP is known as HUSKY B, and it provides a vital safety net to thousands of vulnerable Connecticut children. Since January 2009, HUSKY B enrollment has increased by 2,000 and statewide Medicaid enrollment for kids has increased by 16,000. Since the new law went into effect, Connecticut is receiving 21% more federal dollars to treat more kids.

"There is no doubt that if we hadn't acted to bolster this health insurance initiative, more and more kids in Connecticut would have gone without health care. And that's not acceptable. Here at Connecticut Children's, these providers are on the front lines of caring for the most vulnerable, and so I'm thrilled to be here to share how SCHIP's expansion has helped Connecticut," said Murphy.

Murphy has supported SCHIP since he came to Congress, along with a large, bipartisan group of Members of Congress and governors across the country. Despite all of this support, in 2007, President Bush twice vetoed legislation to bolster SCHIP.

Finally, in February 2009, President Obama signed into law a newly broadened SCHIP that provides health care coverage for 11 million children across the country by preserving coverage for the 7 million children previously covered and extending coverage to 4 million more uninsured children who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in, SCHIP and Medicaid.

Connecticut Children's is dedicated to improving the physical and emotional health of children through family-centered care, research, education and advocacy. The hospital has seen firsthand how the expansion of the federal government's commitment to the program has helped many more children receive care and supported Connecticut families who otherwise would not be able to afford insurance.

In Fiscal Year 2009, Connecticut Children's:

- Experienced over 250,000 patient visits including 35,000 pediatric primary care visits;

- Cared for over 51,000 children in the emergency department-140 children every day, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year; and

- Conducted over 9,800 surgeries ranging from neurosurgery to ear tubes.

Additionally, in Fiscal Year 2009:

- 90% of the hospital's primary care visits were from HUSKY kids (both SCHIP and Medicaid patients);

- 64% of emergency care visits were from HUSKY patients, up from 56% only a year earlier; and

- 42% of physician specialty care visits, like pediatric cardiology, pediatric oncology, and other specialties, were from HUSKY kids.

"SCHIP gives children access to the health care they deserve," said Martin J. Gavin, President and CEO of Connecticut Children's.

"From the perspective of our children, SCHIP provides opportunities for a brighter future. Children who have their health care needs addressed are more likely to be ready for kindergarten, successful in school, and able to develop into adults who are healthy and productive members of society," Paul H. Dworkin, MD, Physician-in-Chief at Connecticut Children's.

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