

## AMERICA'S HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

January 13, 2009

Dear Representative:

On behalf of America's hospital community, we are writing to urge passage of H.R. 2, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009.

Our organizations serve the 7 million children that rely on the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and we support the bill's goal of expanding coverage to the additional 4 million children who are eligible for the program but have not enrolled. At a time of economic recession, when America's families are struggling, the SCHIP program will improve care and coverage for many children in need.

To fund the program's renewal, we support increasing the federal tax on tobacco, and we in particular support the provision to create a prospective ban on physician self-referral to hospitals in which they have an ownership interest. We also appreciate the inclusion of language to allow optional coverage for legal immigrant children and pregnant women, extend optional coverage to low-income pregnant women and improve coverage of dental and mental health benefits for children.

With the short-term extension of the SCHIP program expiring on March 31, it is imperative that Congress act quickly. We urge you to support the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009.

Sincerely,

American Hospital Association  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Federation of American Hospitals  
National Association of Children's Hospitals  
National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems