



August 27, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Robert Byrd
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Speaker
H-232, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
H-107, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
361-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boehner
H-204 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Joint Letter of Support from Georgia Health Care Community and Advocates for PeachCare for Kids™ and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)

We, the undersigned representing Georgia's citizens and health care community, request your continued efforts and further resolve to ensure the continuation of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Georgia's own PeachCare for Kids™ program. If Congress does not take action by September 30, 2007, SCHIP will cease to exist and thousands of children will lose access to health care.

We know, as you do, that the health status of our children and their access to health care is critically important for their well-being and future. Health impacts all aspects of life including the ability to learn, be productive members of a future healthy workforce and contributing members of our communities. As a collective group, we cannot stress enough:

- As parents we know that the health of our own children is of utmost importance
- As employers we know our workforce is impacted by absenteeism and low productivity when the children of our employees are ill and in need of health care
- As health professionals we know the importance of prevention, early diagnosis and intervention and the long term difficulty of treating the acute and long term consequences of delayed or absent care

- As public health and public policy leaders we can attest to the impact enlarging populations of the uninsured on the public health status of our communities and the costs to all levels of government when delayed care, acute crisis care and emergency care is the order of the day
- As providers of health care we can speak to the increasing financial burden of uncompensated care we provide to those who are without health insurance today and the anticipated consequences should the children now covered in SCHIP be forced to join the ranks of the uninsured
- As payers of health care we can demonstrate in clear concise terms the cost to benefit ratio of providing health care coverage and investing in access to preventive services and timely care at the right time and in the appropriate settings

There are many issues being discussed and debated in Congress, and nationally about SCHIP and the uninsured. We recognize the complexity of the issues and politics. However, we state here and now these principles for which we are all in support:

1. SCHIP must be reauthorized by September 30, 2007 to avoid disruption to the millions of children currently enrolled in SCHIP nationally and the 280,000 enrolled here in Georgia
2. Appropriate funding to address the costs of health care coverage for those children already enrolled and for those currently eligible to enroll
3. The federal formula used to determine the state allotments needs to be updated to provide states with the appropriate funding so that shortfalls do not reoccur

We thank you for your efforts and strongly encourage your continued work to save this program.

Sincerely,

Rhonda M. Medows, M.D., Commissioner
Georgia Department of Community Health

Richard L. Holmes, Chairman of the DCH Board

Ross Mason, Vice Chairman of the DCH Board

Mark D. Oshnock, DCH Board Secretary and CEO, Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta

Kim Gay, DCH Board Member

Inman English, MD Pediatrician, DCH Board Member

Frank Jones, DCH Board Member

Ann McKee Parker, PH.D, DCH Board Member

Richard Robinson, DCH Board Member

Mark Trail, Chief, Medical Assistance Plans, DCH

Dr. Greg Goggans, DMD, State Senator, District 07

State Representative Mickey Channell, District 116

Ken Mitchell, State Director, AARP Georgia

Children's Advocacy Centers of Georgia

Dr. Daniel W. Rahn, President of the Medical College of Georgia and Sr. Vice Chancellor for Health and Medical Programs, University System of Georgia

Don Snell, President and CEO of MCG, Health, Inc.

George H. St. George, FACHE, Chief Executive Officer, Screven County Hospital
Jimmy Lewis, HomeTown Health, LLC
Craig Bass, Chief Executive Officer, AMERIGROUP Community Care Georgia
Chris Bowers, Chief Executive Officer, Peach State Health Plan
Michael Cotton, Chief Operating Officer, WellCare of Georgia
Martha S. Phillips, Executive Director, Georgia Dental Association
David R. Tatum, Vice President, Chief Public Policy Officer, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Members of the Georgia Dental Society
Pamela L. Craft, Executive Administrator, Georgia Dental Society
Dr. Roy C. Brooks, President, Georgia Dental Society
J. W. Jamerson, III DDS, Immediate past Chairman Chatham County Department of Family & Children Services, Georgia Dental Society member
Ronald M. Adams, DMD
Georgia AIDS Coalition
Georgia Easter Seals Coalition
Fred Watson, President, Georgia Health Care Association
Joseph A. Parker, President, Georgia Hospital Association
Cathalene Teahan, RN, MSN
Backus Children's Hospital, Savannah, Georgia
St. Joseph's/Candler Health System, Savannah, Georgia
Saint Joseph's Health Systems
Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals
Bill Moore, CEO, Atlanta Medical Center
Joe Austin, CEO, North Fulton Regional Hospital
John Quinn, CEO, Spalding Regional Medical Center
Georgia Academy of Family Physicians
Professional Nursing Alliance
Linda R. Easterly, RN, BSN, MS, COHN-S, President, Georgia Nurses Association, Georgia Chapter American College of Physicians' leadership:
Governor-Vincent M. Nicolais, MD, FACP
Vice President-Jacqueline W. Fincher, MD, FACP
Secretary-Henry M. Patton, MD, FACP
Treasurer- J. Leonard (Len) Lichtenfeld, MD, MACP
Immediate Past Governor-Ruth-Marie (Rhee) Fincher, MD, FACP
Medical Association of Georgia
Voices for Georgia's Children
Jamie C. Lee, DNP, APRN-BC, Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinical Nurse Specialist
Carolyn Moore DDS
Dr. Gina L. Geiger, DMD
Plus One Dental Associates
Jim Hazel, Administrator, Murray Medical Center
Dennis Kiley, President, Emory-Adventist Hospital
Sam Huenergardt, CFO/VP of Finance, Gordon Hospital
Jeremy P. Burnette, Powell Goldstein, LLP
Tara L. Adyanthaya, Esq.
Barbara Johnson, RN, BSN, MHA
Anne Crawford, Southern Regional Medical Center
Michelle Johnson, Evans Memorial Hospital
Louis R. Imbrogno, Executive Director, Central Georgia Health Network

Steve C. Hoelscher, FACHE, CEO, Polk Medical Center
Brenda M. Waltz, FACHE, CEO, Redmond Regional Medical Center
John Bowling, President/CEO, Hamilton Health Care System
Shayne George, President/CEO, Doctors Hospital of Augusta, LLC
Jeffrey G. Broka, Managing Director, Southeast, Quest Diagnostics
Alfreda N. Allen, MHSA, Director, Customer Satisfaction, Gwinnett Hospital System
Rhett C. Partin, MBA, MHA, Executive Director, Center for Rural Health, Georgia Hospital Association
Lisa Hedenstrom, RN, MSN, MBA, CNAA, Vice President Patient Care Services, Chief Nursing Officer, Piedmont Fayette Hospital
Shirley Hollberg, RN, Director of Patient Relations, Piedmont Hospital
Gene B. Wright, CEO, Upson Regional Medical Center
Christopher W. Bonham, CEO, Mountain Lakes Medical Center
Keith Sandlin, CEO, Cartersville Medical Center, Chair, Georgia Hospital Association Board
Jim Peak, CEO, Memorial Hospital and Manor
Douglas C. Keir, CHE, CEO, McDuffie Regional Medical Center
Eric P. Norwood, President/CEO, DeKalb Medical
Charles Scott, CEO, Henry Medical Center
F Patricia McEachrane-Gross, MD MPH, Chief, Department of Medical Management, Martin Army Community Hospital
Heather D. Smith, Systems Coordinator of Maintenance, Tift Regional Medical Center
Barbara Johnson, RN, BSN, MHA, DON Surgical Services, Piedmont Hospital
Jeffrey B. Laird, Controller, Stephens County Hospital
Jan Arroyo R.N., Social Services, WellStar Paulding Hospital
FORBA Dental Management, LLC
Lynne Fritz, MBA, BSMT (ASCP), VP of Revenue Management, Archbold Medical Center
Martin C. Michaels, MD, President, Ga. Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics
Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
Georgia Center for the Visually Impaired
American Association of Adapted Sports Programs
Georgia Society of Clinical Oncology
Robin T. Bingham, DDS, Bingham Dental Group, LLC
Multi-Agency Alliance for Children
CHRIS Kids
Creative Community Services
Elks Aidmore Children's Center
Georgia Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries
Gwinnett Children's Shelter
Inner Harbour
The Bridge
Twin Cedars Youth Services
HCA -Hospital Corporation of America
Georgia Chapter of the American College of Nurse Midwives
William R. Sexson, MD, Associate Dean, Emory University
William P. Kanto, Jr., MD, Professor and Chairman, Department of Pediatrics, Children's Medical Center, Medical College of Georgia
Dr Curt Steinhart, President and CEO of the Physician Practice Group, Medical College of Georgia
Rosemary Thomie, Case Worker, Medical Center of Central Georgia
John T. Fox, President and CEO, Emory Healthcare, Inc

Charles T Adams, FACHE, Ty Cobb Healthcare System
Georgia Pharmacy Association
Georgia Association for Primary Health Care
Georgia Free Clinic Network
Dr. Mark Shurett, Help A Child Smile
Dr. Darryl Smith, Shurett Dental Group
Kaiser Permanente
Henrie M. Treadwell, PhD, Director, Community Voices: Healthcare for the Underserved,
Morehouse School of Medicine
Isaac S. Hadley, DMD
Dr. Derek Mason, DDS, Children's Dentistry of Camp Creek
Janet J. Stiles, DDS, LLC
Theodis Elzie, DDS
Dr. Paula L. Coates, Pediatric Dentist, Nanston Dental Group, P.C.
Chanda Culmer, DDS
David Satcher, MD, 16th Surgeon General of the United States

cc: The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
The Honorable Johnny Isakson
The Honorable John Barrow
The Honorable Sanford Bishop
The Honorable Paul Broun
The Honorable Nathan Deal
The Honorable Phil Gingrey
The Honorable Hank Johnson
The Honorable Jack Kingston
The Honorable John Lewis
The Honorable John Linder
The Honorable Jim Marshall
The Honorable Tom Price
The Honorable David Scott
The Honorable Lynn Westmoreland