



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF TEXAS

ACTION ALERT

**CHILD HEALTH
HB 1541 (TURNER, SYLVESTER) SUPPORT**

League Members: Contact Lt. Gov. Dewhurst toll-free at 866-934-2619 to urge support for HB 1541 to implement 12-month coverage for Children's Medicaid.

When: NOW

Background: HB 1541, legislation to set up a mechanism to provide for 12-month coverage, is currently held up in the House Calendars Committee. The funding initiative in the budget to provide for 12-month coverage, which does not add to the cost of the budget bill, may also be in jeopardy of failing to be included in the final budget. Texas is in an extremely rare and fortunate position to be able to access federal dollars that will provide the funding necessary to pay for 12-month coverage for an additional 258,000 children for the next two years. It is most important at this time is for HB 1541 to be passed out of the Calendars Committee and placed on the Major State Calendar and for the Budget to provide for the full funding for 12-month coverage for the next two years, estimated at \$296 million.

What to Say: Texas has the resources and should maintain funds in the budget for 12-month Children's Medicaid coverage. The current 6-month requirement for re-enrollment is a limiting factor that keeps eligible children from attaining and keeping needed coverage. Extending the enrollment period for Children's Medicaid would provide health insurance for more of Texas' poorest children. It would give them access to quality health care, make it more likely that they would find a medical home, increase their participation in preventative care, and decrease the likelihood of expensive emergency room visits. The current requirement that eligible children re-enroll in Medicaid twice a year doubles the burden for both families and the state. It doubles the chances that an eligible child will lose coverage. It doubles the workload of the already-overloaded system.

Questions may be directed to Susan Majors, Child Health Chair, at majorssusan@gmail.com or at 972-231-0805.