



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF TEXAS

ACTION ALERT

CHILD HEALTH SB 841 SUPPORT and HB 2962 SUPPORT

League Members: Contact the Offices of the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House urging them to take the lead in moving forward a CHIP bill giving Texas children urgently needed health care coverage.

When: NOW

Background:

The House and Senate each passed strong and very similar CHIP bills, **SB 841 (Averitt) SUPPORT** and **HB 2962 (COLEMAN) SUPPORT**. Each was close to final passage, but the battles around other issues threaten to kill efforts to cover an estimated 80,000 uninsured children.

Until yesterday, the sponsors and supporters were optimistic that SB 841 would get a floor vote before the Tuesday midnight House deadline. Now that confidence is no longer there.

The House is involved in a slow-down to try to prevent consideration of a controversial voter ID bill. Members of one party are using rules to slow the process, and some members of the other party are refusing to let any bills – no matter how important – be voted on “out of order” before the voter ID bill.

There are a number of ways the bill could be saved. The CHIP bills have bipartisan authors and sponsors and received strong bipartisan support. Both versions of the bill are good and any compromise bill could be even better. Here are several options:

- The House could vote to allow the Senate CHIP bill (SB 841) to be heard “out of order.”
- Senator Ogden could allow HB 2962 to be voted out of Senate Finance committee and on to the Senate floor.
- The House and Senate could each suspend their usual rules to continue to consider this bill (and other major bills) after the current deadlines, if needed.

No matter what the approach, leadership of the Lieutenant Governor and the leadership of the Speaker of the House are essential if Texas children are to get the health care coverage that they need.

What to Say:

"We are counting on your leadership to make sure either SB 841 or HB 2962 passes both houses and becomes law. This legislation has bipartisan authors and support, and we call on the leaders of each body to do what it takes to save this important legislation to help Texas children."

- Lt. Governor Dewhurst's office: (512) 463-0001
- Speaker Straus' office: (512) 463-1000

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