

*** Action Alert: CHIP & HB 109**

April 30, 2007

CHIP and HB 109

Contact Senators on the Senate Finance Committee

The Senate Finance Committee has not scheduled **HB 109(Turner)** on their agenda. It has been suggested that there is not much interest in **HB109**. *Nothing could be further from the truth!*

HB 109 passed the House by a large margin and has been in the Senate since April 11.

ACTION FOR YOU TO TAKE

On Monday please call your member of the Senate Finance Committee (the list is below and the contact information is in *When You Go to Austin*) and ask them to schedule **HB 109** as soon as possible.

It is vital that Brazos Valley contact Senator Ogden.

FOLLOWUP

As soon as you make your call contact Raul Salazar, Executive Administrator, to let him know you called and to share any information that you found out during your call.

Senator	Local League
Ogden	BRAZOS VALLEY
Zaffirini	SAN ANTONIO
Averitt	WACO AREA
Deuell	DALLAS
Duncan	LUBBOCK
Eltife	TYLER
Fraser	KERRVILLE AREA
Hinojosa	CORPUS CHRISTI
Janek	HOUSTON
Lucio	HIDALGO COUNTY
Nelson	DENTON
Shapiro	IRVING/PLANO/COLLIN COUNTY/RICHARDSON
West	DALLAS
Whitmire	HOUSTON AREA
Williams	MONTGOMERY COUNTY

BACKGROUND

Texas has the nation's highest rate of uninsured children, with one in five kids lacking coverage. The drops in enrollment over the past couple of years have hit rural areas the hardest.

The Cure – Cut the number of uninsured Texas kids in half by enrolling every eligible child in CHIP and Medicaid.

The Texas House overwhelmingly passed **HB 109 (Turner, Davis, J, Dukes, England and Pena) SUPPORT** which was engrossed on 4-4 and received in the Senate 4/10. Additionally the bill has a long list of coauthors.

HB 109 would:

- Return to a 12 month continuous eligibility period;
- Allow for the deduction of child care expenses from a family's income when determining eligibility;
- Eliminate the 90-day waiting period before coverage begins;
- Increase the assets limit to \$10,000 (up from \$5,000) and the vehicle allowance to \$18,000 (up from \$15,000);
- Increase outreach efforts so that more children who are eligible for CHIP coverage are enrolled. It is estimated that this number is 100,000.

The CHIP program is not for slackers. CHIP insures the children of working parents who earn too little to afford private health insurance but make too much to be eligible for Medicaid. To quote the *Austin American Statesman*, "this is the best deal in town". For every dollar CHIP spends in Texas, the federal government pays 72 cents and the state pays 28 cents.

The state needs a CHIP restoration bill and the Senate Finance Committee needs to act now.