

TESTIMONY
House Human Services Committee
Re: Children's Health Insurance Program
March 1, 2007

I am Julia Marsden speaking today for the League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV-TX) in support of proposed legislation that would address the Children's Health Insurance Program. The League strongly supports any or all proposed bills that will:

- provide 12 months continuous eligibility for CHIP
- provide 12 months continuous eligibility for children's Medicaid (**SB 266, Zaffirini**)
- fix problems with the Integrated Eligibility System for CHIP and children's Medicaid
- eliminate the CHIP asset test
- eliminate the CHIP 90 day delay of coverage for uninsured children in favor of the original anti-crowd out policy
- deduct child care and child support expenses when calculating income for CHIP
- provide adequate reimbursement for Medicaid and CHIP providers
- fund outreach and education for children's health insurance at 2002 levels

The state needs a CHIP restoration bill. As a member of the CHIP coalition/Insure Texas Kids agenda we say let's "*get it done*".

In addition, LWV-TX supports proposed legislation (**HB 740 (Naishtat) and HB 1051 (Naishtat/SB 693 (Uresti)**) that would repair the broken eligibility system and problems with private contractors. These are problems that policy changes alone will not fix. Texas needs to develop eligibility screening and enrollment procedures that would automatically enroll eligible children in the children's Medicaid program using a consolidated application, address what should be a seamless process for moving from one program to the other and addresses performance standards for processing time, eligibility determination for CHIP and Medicaid and training and staffing of those processing applications.

LWV-TX also supports the Health and Human Services exception item #19 to restore Medicaid and CHIP rates.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of CHIP and for considering the concerns we have addressed.