



INTRODUCING THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

A 1996 bipartisan budget agreement set aside \$16 billion in federal funds to expand health coverage and services for low-income children. It was up to Congress to decide how to use the money. Senators Rockefeller and John Chafee (R-RI) began collaborating to draft a proposal for a children's health bill in early 1997. Rockefeller and his staff determined that using Medicaid, an existing program, and including a higher federal match rate for coverage, would be less expensive and cover more children than creating a new program.

The Chafee-Rockefeller proposal was unveiled on April 24 and received broad bipartisan support. Titled the "Children's Health Insurance Provides Security (CHIPS) Act of 1997," it sought to cover one-third of the nation's children who were eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid. It addressed the large percentage of working families with incomes below 150 percent of poverty (\$24,000 for a family of four) who lacked employer-sponsored health insurance. By making enrollment easier and increasing the number of children eligible for Medicaid, the bill would cover 5 million children through the age of 18. It offered states financial incentives to participate and provided 12 months of continuous coverage regardless of monthly fluctuations in family income.



JAY ROCKEFELLER, U.S. SENATOR FOR WEST VIRGINIA

NEWS

WASHINGTON OFFICE: PHONE (202) 224-6472 CHARLESTON OFFICE: (304) 347-6372

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 24, 1997 CONTACT: Jim Whitney 202-224-6101

Statement by U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) at Press Conference Announcing Children's Health Insurance Provides Security (CHIPS) Act

The legislation we are announcing today is an important, realistic, bipartisan effort to cover five million - about half - of America's uninsured children. For me personally, it is one more step that I have been determined to take to carry out the bipartisan action plan recommended by the National Commission on Children that I chaired.

Our bill extends coverage to millions more children by building on Medicaid's success at delivering health care to low-income children.

We all know that uninsured children don't get the health care they need. They don't have regular doctor visits. They don't get their immunizations. Tragically, they don't even necessarily get life-saving treatments.

And, as a result, uninsured children end up with more serious and more costly health care problems - problems which, many times, could have been prevented by a check-up or early treatment.

We've chosen to build on Medicaid because Medicaid is in place, it works, and it is cost effective. States know how to use it. Families are familiar with the program. It has a proven track record.

Our bill encourages states to expand their Medicaid program to cover all children in families earning less than \$24,000 a year. As Senator Chafee said, there's no mandate, just the promise of additional matching funds.

Our bill will help Medicaid work better and for more children.

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JIM JEFFORDS

UNITED STATES SENATOR - VERMONT

April 24, 1997

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES M. JEFFORDS INTRODUCTION OF "CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROVIDES SECURITY"

The millions of America need our help. Nearly 10 million children have no health insurance. Many of these children live in families with working parents who simply do not make enough money to afford health insurance.

Senator John Breaux

Democrat-Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE April 24, 1997

BREAUX SIGNS ONTO NEW CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE EFFORT

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. John Breaux (D-La.) joined a group of 13 bipartisan lawmakers today at a Capitol Hill press conference to announce legislation that will increase the number of children who are covered by health insurance.

NEWS RELEASE

OLYMPIA SNOWE

U.S. Senator for Maine

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Thursday, April 24, 1997 CONTACT: DAVE LACEY (202) 224-1344

SNOWE COSPONSORS CHAFE, ROCKEFELLER LEGISLATION TO EXPAND HEALTH COVERAGE FOR 5 MILLION CHILDREN

News From **SENATOR JOHN CHAFE**

RHODE ISLAND

505 DIMKEN BUILDING WASHINGTON D.C. 20510-3902 (202) 224-2921

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Thursday, April 24, 1997

CHAFE UNVEILS BILL TARGETING 5 MILLION CHILDREN FOR HEALTH INSURANCE: HATCH/KENNEDY COSPONSOR

New Bipartisan Legislation Has Support of 16 Senators, 9 on Finance Committee

SENATE CONFIRMS **S. 674**

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) will visit with children and doctors at hospitals and health clinics across the state from May 28-30 to focus attention on the need to provide health insurance to tens of thousands of West Virginia children who don't have it.

On April 30 of this year, Rockefeller introduced legislation with Republican Senator John Chafee of Rhode Island that targets health care coverage to 2 million - about half - of America's uninsured children. The legislation, the Children's Health Insurance Provides Security Act (CHIPS), aims to extend health care coverage to approximately 42,700 West Virginia children.

"If a child doesn't have access to health care, the catch-all standard against him or her from the beginning," said Rockefeller. "Our bill provides coverage to children in families who are working hard to make ends meet. It will help children stay healthy and ensure that they get sick, they can get the treatment they need."

Rockefeller's legislation builds on Medicaid to extend coverage nationally. It - including women's efforts to get 1 million children who are eligible for, but not enrolled in Medicaid, into the Medicaid program.

-Encouraging states to expand eligibility to 2 million children through the age of 18 whose families earn up to \$24,000 (for a family of four).

"Uninsured children don't get the health care they need. They don't have regular doctor visits. They don't get their immunizations," continued Rockefeller. "And, as a result, health problems that could be prevented by a check-up or early treatment become more serious and more costly."

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Other members of Congress drafted children's health bills, as well, and Rockefeller believed that numerous proposals increased the chances of having genuine debate about the best approach that Congress could deliver. Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT) introduced the "Child Health Insurance and Lower Deficit (CHILD) Act." The CHILD Act complemented the Chafee-Rockefeller bill and proposed giving grants to states to help families buy private insurance. The grants would be paid for by an increase in the national tobacco tax. Together, the bills sought to help the poorest uninsured children and children whose working parents earned slightly above Medicaid levels.

Rockefeller promoting health plan for children

Senator explains program during Weirton stop

MICHELLE BEACH

WEIRTON — Senator John Chafee has announced that he will be visiting Weirton and its surrounding areas to meet with children and their parents. Chafee will be joined by U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller, who is visiting Weirton for the first time. The two senators are promoting their legislation to provide health insurance to 5 million uninsured children. Chafee said that he will be visiting Weirton from May 28-30 to focus attention on the need to provide health insurance to tens of thousands of West Virginia children who don't have it.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 23, 1997 CONTACT: Jim Whitney 202-224-6101

ROCKEFELLER TRAVELS STATE TO PUSH CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

Stop: Weirton, Marlinton and Morgantown

WASHINGTON, DC — U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) will visit with children and doctors at hospitals and health clinics across the state from May 28-30 to focus attention on the need to provide health insurance to tens of thousands of West Virginia children who don't have it.

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“There is a better alternative: a straightforward measure supported by Sens. John Chafee (R-RI) and John D. Rockefeller IV (D-W.Va.)...Of all the child health-care proposals, it is targeted most carefully at the children who need it most.”

Newsday, June 9, 1997