



National
Association
of Public
Hospitals
and Health
Systems

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 950
Washington, DC 20004
202 585 0100 tel / 202 585 0101 fax
www.naph.org

May 7, 2007

The Honorable Pete Stark
239 Cannon House Office Bldg.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Stark:

I am writing on behalf of the National Association of Public Hospitals & Health Systems (NAPH) to convey our support of the “MediKids Health Insurance Act of 2007,” which would provide health insurance for all children in the U.S. by 2012 regardless of family income.

NAPH represents more than 100 safety net hospitals and health systems nationwide. NAPH member hospitals fulfill a unique and critical role in the health care system providing high intensity services—such as trauma, neonatal intensive care, and burn care—to the entire community while providing a disproportionate share of care to Medicaid beneficiaries and the uninsured. Our mission is to provide health care services to all individuals, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. Because of our members’ safety net mission, NAPH hospitals provide 24 percent of the uncompensated hospital care in the nation. Twenty-one percent of NAPH hospital member costs are uncompensated, as opposed to 5.5 percent for hospitals nationally.

NAPH has long been supportive of all efforts to expand access to health insurance coverage for the uninsured, with the ultimate goal being universal coverage. Your legislation represents an important step toward achieving this goal. We are grateful for your efforts to establish this new program to help ensure that all children in the U.S. have appropriate health coverage. In particular, NAPH appreciates the fact that your proposal would provide for automatic enrollment at birth for children born after December 31, 2006 until age 23 and an annually updated comprehensive benefit package for children that includes a simplified cost sharing mechanism and prescription drug coverage.

We thank you for your ongoing leadership in developing legislation to expand coverage to the uninsured and we look forward to working with you further to develop solutions to the problems of our nation’s poor and uninsured.

Sincerely,

Larry S. Gage
President