



MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
From: Carol Guthrie for Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.)
Re: CBO comment on numbers of uninsured children eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program

Please find attached a letter delivered this morning to Finance Chairman Baucus from Congressional Budget Office (CBO) Director Peter Orszag, affirming estimates that as many as six million currently uninsured American children are eligible to receive health coverage through public programs such as the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Medicaid. Baucus requested analysis from CBO last month, after the Department of Health and Human Services released a flawed study attempting seeking to reduce estimates of uninsured children who could be helped by these programs. From Chairman Baucus:

"America's families need Congress to follow the facts, and CBO has provided good guidance about the real number of uninsured children who desperately need our help. It's unconscionable that the Administration tried to fudge the numbers of uninsured kids to squelch the successful Children's Health Insurance Program. CHIP works to get health coverage to uninsured children in low-income working families, and millions are depending on Congress to renew this program with real funds and real outreach to help uninsured children in need."

See below the statement issued by Chairman Baucus following the original June 15 report. Even prior to CBO's letter today, prominent researchers had indicated that the methodology of the study promoted by HHS was not sound – particularly the consideration only of children who go an entire year without insurance for eligibility, which is not a requirement of CHIP or Medicaid. Experts' responses also indicated that the study was not appropriately peer-reviewed.



For Immediate Release
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Contact: Carol Guthrie (Baucus)
Steven Broderick (Rockefeller)

**SENATORS BLAST APPARENT ATTEMPT TO SHRINK NUMBER OF KIDS
ELIGIBLE FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM**

*Study from Department of Health and Human Services
could cost five million uninsured children a chance at health coverage*

Washington, DC – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Health Subcommittee Chairman John D. Rockefeller (D-W. Va.) today blasted a new, skewed report from Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that tries to deny the number of uninsured children eligible for the State Children's Health Insurance Program or Medicaid. The HHS study ignores widely accepted data indicating that six million uninsured American children qualify for CHIP or Medicaid. The Senators sharply questioned the accuracy of the data released today.

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“This study flies in the face of all accepted data on the number of uninsured American children who desperately need and could receive health coverage through a renewal of the CHIP program,” said Baucus. **“The Urban Institute study counting about six million uninsured children as eligible for CHIP or Medicaid has long been accepted by researchers and policy makers alike. And this new lowball figure for eligible children does nothing to change the CBO finding that the Administration’s budget proposal for CHIP would not only fail to reach additional children, but would actually cause 1.4 million kids to lose their CHIP coverage. I have been concerned before about CMS portraying political efforts as actual research. I intend to closely review not only the data released by CMS, but also the methodology that went into achieving this data and the motivations for its creation. The Finance Committee will craft a robust renewal of the Children’s Health Insurance Program based on the actual facts.”**

"The study put forward by HHS is a deliberate attempt to derail continued health care coverage for children. The Administration doesn't want to make a real commitment to our kids, and it is using every excuse it can -- even manufactured ones -- to walk away from covering uninsured children," said Rockefeller. **“The reality is, there are 9 million uninsured kids in America, and we have a responsibility to provide them with health care,"** Rockefeller said. **"The President's proposal falls short and would result in children being dropped from the children’s health insurance program. That's unacceptable to me and a majority of the Senate. We will continue to put kids first, and make sure that states have the resources they need to provide coverage for these very real and vulnerable children."**

Statements today by prominent researchers indicate that the study’s methodology was not sound – for instance, in counting the number of uninsured children eligible for public health programs, the study only considers children who go an entire year without insurance for eligibility, which is not a requirement of CHIP or Medicaid. Experts’ responses also indicate that the study was not appropriately peer-reviewed. [Click here to see other public comments about the HHS study.](#)

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