

## **OPENING STATEMENT**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing on an important issue in health care. We may not always agree on every health care bill that comes before us, but we certainly agree that the health of our young people vitally important to our health as a nation. You have made children's health a cornerstone of your career here in the Senate, and I applaud your efforts in raising the profile of this issue.

I am hopeful that we can have a very positive dialogue about the path forward for CHIP. I think one of the program's greatest strengths is flexibility to the states. We need to focus our efforts here on identifying core mission of the program in a way that builds on the good work that many states are doing, and which serves the population that truly needs help.

I thank your witnesses for being here today to share your perspectives on the program.