

# NHMA



## National Hispanic Medical Association™

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September 26, 2007

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-221  
The Capitol

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-230  
The Capitol

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA), a non-profit association representing 36,000 licensed Hispanic physicians in the United States, we support the *Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007*, which will allow the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to expand enrollment of Hispanic children. Since one in five Hispanic children are currently uninsured, this program is vital to increasing access to health care.

The mission of NHMA is to improve the health of Hispanics and other underserved populations. We support this Act because it will:

- Provide states with incentives to enroll 3.2 million currently uninsured children in the next five years.
- Improve state outreach and enrollment activities that will target minority children.
- Support U.S. Department of Health and Human Services initiatives to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in coverage and quality of care.
- Increase access to critical benefits such as mental health, dental health, as well as private coverage.

Lastly, we are very disappointed that the *Legal Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act (Legal ICHIA)*, is not included. Legal ICHIA would lift the five year ban on *legal* immigrant children and pregnant women's ability to apply for SCHIP and Medicaid. We ask that Legal ICHIA be addressed in future legislation.

In summary, the National Hispanic Medical Association supports the *Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization Act*, because it will increase access to health insurance for Hispanic children and will, thus, improve the health of all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elena Rios".

Elena Rios, MD, MSPH  
President and CEO