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November 27, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM), representing the nation’s nearly 57,000 hospitalists, including those who practice in children’s hospitals, is writing to urge Congress to prioritize the reauthorization of the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). CHIP is a lifeline for millions of children nationwide, and has been a critical driver of lowering the uninsured rate among children since 1997.

Pediatric hospitalists are specialists who provide inpatient medical care for hospitalized children, including many children who receive coverage through CHIP. They coordinate care for their patients within the hospital, and work to improve transitions of care throughout and after their hospital stay.

Pediatric hospitalists see firsthand the value of CHIP in enabling children, regardless of their family’s financial situation, to have access to healthcare coverage both while hospitalized and in the outpatient setting to help prevent future admissions.

On September 30, 2017, CHIP funding authorization expired, setting off a rolling crisis through the states as carry-over funding runs out. It is imperative Congress act now to reverse this trend and to reauthorize the program, preferably for a five-year extension. The program has a proven track record of success and a nearly twenty-year history of bipartisan support.



CHIP is a vital source of stability for the health of our children, and the program's uncertain future is an unacceptable step backwards. SHM urges Congress to act now to restore funding for CHIP and ensure millions of children nationwide have access to health care. We stand ready to help move this important priority forward. If you have any questions, please contact Josh Boswell, Director of Government Relations at jboswell@hospitalmedicine.org or 267-702-2635.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Greeno M.D." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Ron Greeno, MD, FCCP, MHM
President, Society of Hospital Medicine

CC:

Sen. Orrin Hatch, Chairman U.S. Senate Committee on Finance

Sen. Ron Wyden, Ranking Member U.S. Senate Committee on Finance

Rep. Greg Walden, Chairman U.S. House Energy & Commerce Committee

Rep. Frank Pallone, Ranking Member U.S. House Energy & Commerce Committee