It has been about two months since Congress failed to extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which expired on September 30.

The message from advocates is clear: It should not take children losing their health insurance for Congress to act. As the days and weeks pass after the deadline, millions of children and families are left with more uncertainty about whether they will be able to access the health care they rely on. In addition, states are facing their own uncertainty as they await an extension of federal CHIP funding, which would ensure their CHIP programs can continue on sound financial footing. Read below for more information on where efforts stand in both the House and Senate.

Right now, we need as many voices coming together as possible to tell Congress to extend funding for the program without delay.

We encourage you to use the resources and information in this toolkit to join our efforts and amplify the message that Congress cannot wait any longer to take action. In particular, we are planning a Day of Action on Thursday, November 30 – more information below. Please feel free to share this information far and wide within your networks. Thank you for your continued commitment to speaking up for children, pregnant women and families.

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State of Play

CHIP was created in 1997 with overwhelming bipartisan support. Authorization and funding for the program has been renewed several times over the past 20 years, including most recently in 2015. However, Congress failed to extend federal funding for CHIP, which expired on September 30, 2017.

In the Senate:
On September 18, the Senate Finance Committee introduced bipartisan legislation, the Keep Kids’ Insurance Dependable and Secure (KIDS) Act of 2017, that would extend CHIP for five years, protecting the program’s bipartisan history, and would also maintain current CHIP policy with some minor changes to the federal match rate.
On October 4, the Senate Finance Committee passed the KIDS Act without amendment. The bill awaits action on the Senate floor. Here is the AAP’s [letter](#) of support on the KIDS Act.

**In the House:**

The House passed an updated version of H.R. 3922, the CHAMPIONING HEALTHY KIDS Act of 2017, on November 3, which combines the reauthorization of CHIP funding with the extension of other health programs. While the bill includes sound policy that pediatricians support—extending CHIP for five years, stabilizing enrollment, and preserving current funding levels through 2019—it is paid for in a way that may harm children’s health. Specifically, the bill cuts the Prevention and Public Health Fund, makes risky changes to Medicaid financing and puts in place new barriers for families to access affordable health care coverage in the private marketplace. Here is AAP’s [statement](#) on the revised bill.

**What’s next:**

No timing for consideration of a CHIP reauthorization bill has been announced in the Senate. The Senate is unlikely to take up the House-passed bill due to objections in the Senate to the ways CHIP is paid for in the House bill.

Congress still has several steps to take before CHIP funding is extended. House and Senate leadership must agree on the details of a final bill and secure the votes for its passage before sending it to President Trump for final approval. It is possible that a final CHIP funding bill may be attached to another bill moving through Congress.

**Upcoming Advocacy Opportunities**

**#ExtendCHIP Day of Action: Thursday, November 30**

AAP is hosting an [#ExtendCHIP Day of Action on Thursday, November 30](#), two months after CHIP funding expired. Throughout the day, we encourage advocates to contact their members of Congress, share messages on social media and amplify the message that Congress must immediately extend CHIP funding for five years. By concentrating our efforts, we hope to elevate the conversation on CHIP and draw attention to the urgency around extending funding.

The hashtag for the Day of Action will be [#ExtendCHIP](#). We encourage you to use the sample messages in this toolkit throughout the day. We have strength in numbers, and we hope you can join us!

**Earned media opportunities**

Local perspectives published on the pages of newspapers across the country are powerful. Please feel free to use the messages and state-specific data in this toolkit to draft and submit op-eds and letters-to-the-editor to your state newspaper on the need to extend CHIP funding without delay.

**CHIP State Fact Sheets**

For state-specific data on CHIP, be sure to check out these [fact sheets](#) from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Georgetown University.
Health Policy Institute Center for Children and Families (pictured right). The fact sheets are labeled as “CHIP Fact Sheet” under each state name. We encourage you to incorporate this state-specific data into your advocacy messaging.

Social Media Messages

Hashtags to Use: #ExtendCHIP (primary hashtag for days of action), #CHIPworks, #KeepKidsCovered

Handles for all U.S. Senators: https://twitter.com/cspan/lists/senators/members

Handles for all U.S. Representatives: https://twitter.com/cspan/lists/u-s-representatives

Be sure to use .@ if you are beginning your tweet with a Twitter handle, as indicated below. There is no need for a period before the @ sign if a twitter handle is not in the beginning of the tweet.

Calling (list @Legislatorhandles)! It’s been two months since CHIP funding expired. Time is running out for xxxx kids in (your state)! #ExtendCHIP

It shouldn’t take a child losing access to health insurance to get Congress to act. #ExtendCHIP & keep 9 million children covered!

Consistent coverage = healthy kids. @GeorgetownCCF report shows how #CHIPworks to #KeepKidsCovered! http://bit.ly/2eLByjr #ExtendCHIP

Time is up (list @Legislatorhandles)! #ExtendCHIP now to protect xxxx kids in (your state)! (link to and pull data from your state fact sheet from this page under “CHIP fact sheet”)

Why is CHIP important? Uninsured children are 5x more likely to have an unmet need for medical care. #ExtendCHIP

#CHIPworks to #KeepKidsCovered: CHIP is helping 9M kids get check-ups, immunizations, prescriptions & more! #ExtendCHIP

#CHIPworks b/c it's affordable for families, covers age-appropriate services & includes children's hospitals & specialists. #ExtendCHIP

As a (parent/physician/etc) in {state}, CHIP keeps my (family/children/patients) healthy. Congress: #ExtendCHIP!

CHIP is a bipartisan success story that 9 million children depend on. Congress: #ExtendCHIP now!


Every day past CHIP's funding deadline 9/30, more and more families face an uncertain future. Congress, #ExtendCHIP now!

Additional State-Specific Information

The following states are projected to exhaust federal funding before 2018: Arizona, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Mississippi, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Utah. Additionally, West
Virginia, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Texas and Minnesota have all detailed pieces of their processes for planning for the exhaustion of their federal funding for CHIP.

The map below from the Kaiser Family Foundation shows the projections of when states are expected to exhaust their federal CHIP funds. More information here.

Contact Your Members of Congress

Please consider reaching out directly to your senators and urging them to extend CHIP funding for five years.

Talking points

Please feel free to use the talking points below to call your legislators. To find your senators, go to Senate.gov and “Find Your Senators” in the upper left-hand corner. Their official .gov websites will have their DC Office contact information.

• Hello. As a constituent of {your state}, I am calling today to urge {Senator's name} to pass legislation that would extend current funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for five years and maintain the bipartisan history of the program.
• CHIP funding expired about two months ago. It should not take children losing their health insurance for Congress to act.
• Real children and families are facing the implications and the ongoing uncertainty about whether or not they will be able to access the health care they rely on.
• Because CHIP funding has not been extended, states have been forced to make difficult choices as they question the future of their CHIP programs. Actions range from slashing enrollment and reducing benefits to imposing higher costs for families, to potentially eliminating CHIP altogether. Already several states are using funds meant to operate the program to begin the process of shutting it down.
• It doesn’t have to be this way. CHIP is a bipartisan success story. The program was created in 1997 and has been championed by lawmakers on both sides of the aisle since its very beginning.
• Nearly 9 million children across the country are enrolled in the program. CHIP stands on the shoulders of Medicaid to cover children in working families who are not eligible for Medicaid and lack access to affordable private coverage.
• Nineteen states also use CHIP to extend coverage to pregnant women, removing barriers to pregnancy coverage and prenatal care for about 370,000 women each year.
• The program is designed around what children need. It offers benefits that are age-appropriate, including dental coverage and mental health and substance abuse services, which may not be covered by a family’s employer-sponsored insurance.
• CHIP plans include networks of pediatricians, pediatric medical and surgical subspecialists, and children’s hospitals, which are especially critical for children with special health care needs.
• Families who rely on CHIP already face uncertainty and challenges, whether managing a complicated health condition for their child or determining how to afford day-to-day living expenses. The last thing these families need is added uncertainty about the future of their children’s medical and dental coverage or whether they will have access to necessary prenatal care services.
• By not acting in a timely manner to renew CHIP funding, Congress has caused them to face the threat of losing coverage altogether.
• CHIP’s proven track record of providing high-quality, cost-effective coverage for low-income children and pregnant women in working families must be continued.
• Please take immediate action to extend current CHIP funding for five years. We cannot leave our children and families to face an uncertain future any longer.
• Thank you.

Other Helpful Resources

• An article from the Daily Beast, “Congress Created a Health-Care Crisis for Kids Right in Time for the Holidays”
• An article from The Atlantic, “The Damage to Children's Health Insurance Is Already Being Done”
• A piece from the Village Voice on a New York family that relies on CHIP
• An op-ed from the St. Louis Post Dispatch, “Congress uses kids' lives as bargaining chips”
• A piece from NBC News, "Millions of kids may lose health insurance over missed deadline by Congress"
• An infographic from the National Academy for State Health Policy, “State Checklist for Shutting Down CHIP Programs”
• AAP’s statement on the House CHIP bill
• A report from the Kaiser Family Foundation, “Current Status of State Planning for the Future of CHIP”
• A fact sheet, “Children’s Health Insurance Program: Setting the Record Straight”
• A statement from the National Governors Association on CHIP extension