

November 1, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

As members of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons, the Pediatric Orthopedic Society of North America, and the Scoliosis Research Society, we are privileged to care for the nation's children and in doing so have witnessed the profound positive effects programs like the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) have had on our patients. As physicians specializing in the musculoskeletal surgical care of children, our ability to treat these children at an appropriate time can have profound effects on their productivity and future well-being as adults, and so we urge passage of legislation that would extend the program's current level of funding for the next five years and maintain its bipartisan history.

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. Standing on the shoulders of Medicaid to cover children in working families who are not eligible for Medicaid and lack access to affordable private coverage, nearly 9 million children across the country are enrolled in CHIP, which is designed around what children need. It offers benefits that are age-appropriate and which may not be covered by a family's employer-sponsored insurance. Additionally, CHIP plans include robust networks of pediatricians, pediatric medical and surgical subspecialists, and children's hospitals, which are especially critical for children with special health care needs.

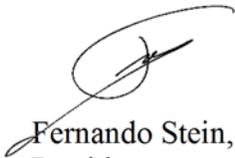
CHIP funding expired on September 30, and this missed deadline has real implications for real children and families. With every additional day that passes without a funding extension, millions of children and families are left with more uncertainty about whether or not they will be able to access the health care they rely on. If Congress fails to act, states will be forced to make drastic cuts to the program, including slashing enrollment, reducing benefits, and imposing higher costs for families. Any of these actions could reduce timely access to care for the 9 million children who rely on CHIP, which would threaten their short-term health status, as well as their potential to succeed as an adult in the long-term.

We were encouraged to see CHIP legislation marked up in both the House and Senate earlier this month. Additionally, we applaud Congress for its work to come to a bipartisan consensus on policy to reauthorize CHIP funding for five years. However, we believe any extension to the

bipartisan CHIP program should not be accompanied by offsets that do harm to providers, patients, or access to care.

Our children deserve comprehensive, affordable health care that is there for them when they need it. As such, we strongly encourage Congress to take immediate action on a clean extension of CHIP funding for five years.

Sincerely,



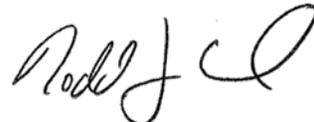
Fernando Stein, MD, FAAP  
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American Academy of Pediatrics



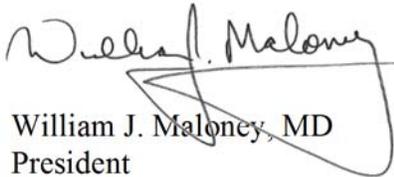
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Todd J. Albert, MD  
President  
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William J. Maloney, MD  
President  
American Association of Orthopedic  
Surgeons

CC: The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
The Honorable Ron Wyden  
The Honorable Greg Walden  
The Honorable Frank Pallone