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CHIP funding allows children, pediatricians to ‘take a deep breath’

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Congress has approved a six-year funding extension for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a move that protects coverage for millions of children.

AAP President Colleen A. Kraft, M.D., FAAP, called the extension an “important step forward for children and families.”

“With today’s passage of funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the families of nearly 9 million children and their doctors can finally take a deep breath,” Dr. Kraft said in a [statement](#). “After 114 days of worry, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) welcomes today’s bipartisan Congressional action to extend CHIP funding for six years.”

CHIP, which began in 1997, finances high-quality health care for children whose families earn too little to afford private insurance but too much to qualify for Medicaid. The benefits cover a broad range of services and include networks of pediatricians, pediatric medical and surgical subspecialists, and children’s hospitals.

The Academy and its members launched a campaign to advocate for an extension of CHIP funding, which expired Sept. 30, by holding days of action, reaching out to lawmakers, writing op-eds, participating in interviews and speaking out on social media.

The deal reached Monday was part of an agreement to end a three-day government shutdown. While CHIP was a significant victory, the future of other programs impacting children remain uncertain, and AAP advocacy is continuing.

“Now that Congress has acted on CHIP, we urge a similar bipartisan approach to the other pressing child health issues that remain unresolved, such as the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV), which serves at-risk pregnant women and parents with young children,” Dr. Kraft said. “We also call on lawmakers to find a permanent solution that will allow Dreamers — immigrants brought to the United States as children and who are now young adults — to remain in the United States. ... As always, we stand ready to work with elected officials at all levels of government to advance policies that are most supportive of children and their families.”

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