

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



For Immediate Release: October 5, 2009

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Press Statement

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS APPLAUDS SENATOR JAY ROCKEFELLER'S STIRRING SPEECH IN SUPPORT OF MEDICAID

Washington, DC—The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which represents 60,000 pediatricians, praises Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.) for his strong support of Medicaid and children's health provisions within health reform. As the Senate Finance Committee finished its longest legislative mark-up in 15 years last week, Sen. Rockefeller gave a moving speech that provided a much-needed focus on the struggles of one of our country's most vulnerable and often least heard populations. Children make up more than half of all Medicaid beneficiaries, and the Academy commends Sen. Rockefeller for championing their cause.

"A long-time supporter of children's issues, particularly when it comes to providing all children with access to high quality care, Sen. Rockefeller has introduced for the past nine years the MediKids Health Insurance Act. While not yet passed by Congress, this legislation represents the Academy's gold standard of care for children, and would provide benefits similar to those currently covered by Medicaid, including the screening and prevention services so crucial to successful childhood development.

"The Academy also applauds Sen. Rockefeller for introducing his amendment C21, co-sponsored by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), to the Senate Finance Committee's health reform bill. This amendment will remove the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) from the proposed Exchange. In doing so, Sen. Rockefeller and his colleagues have succeeded in preserving CHIP and thus preventing potential disruption in coverage and reduction of medically necessary services that would take place should children be forced to transfer out of CHIP. While there is still work to be done to ensure that all children have access to the health care they need and deserve, this amendment will ensure that those covered under CHIP will not lose access to the affordable care and benefits they receive under the program.

"In his speech last week, Sen. Rockefeller shared a firsthand account of just how much Medicaid means to so many Americans, including the thousands of children who rely on its services to stay healthy. The American Academy of Pediatrics looks forward to working with Congress to encourage broader health reform to ensure that all children have access to affordable, high quality health coverage."

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To watch Sen. Rockefeller's speech, visit the link below and flash forward to minute 17 in the video:

<http://www.c-spanarchives.org/program/ID/213285>.

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.