

American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

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**Press Statement on
FAILURE OF CONGRESS TO ADDRESS SCHIP FUNDING SHORTFALL**

**By
Mary Anne McCaffree, MD, FAAP, chair, AAP Committee on
Federal Government Affairs**

“Congressional attempts to adequately fund the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for 2007 failed today. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), representing 60,000 pediatricians, worked for months with many other organizations to get Congress to act, but child health was swept aside again. This inaction has potentially dire consequences: more than 500,000 children could lose their health care coverage.

“Seventeen states are currently projected to have insufficient federal SCHIP funds. States may be forced to enact harmful changes to their SCHIP programs, such as reducing enrollment, restricting benefits, increasing patient fees or reducing provider payments.

“The SCHIP program has achieved remarkable progress in its 10-year history. It covers more than 6 million children of working families, and has played a part in steadily driving down the rate of uninsured children from 20% a decade ago to below 15% today. SCHIP has resulted in more children having a usual source of care, receiving preventive care and immunizations, and reducing unmet need for dental care.

“The congressional inaction is puzzling, given the program has strong bipartisan support on Capitol Hill and among the public. The failure of Congress to act could add more children to the ranks of the uninsured. It’s clear that children need help. Once again, they were denied.”

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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.