

September 7, 2007

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State of California
Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

I am joining with Californians who value the health of our children and families to ask you to stay true to your commitment to health care reform in our state.

Last year, your leadership brought the prospect of real health care reform that would provide coverage and improve the health of all Californians. You made the first step to covering all children by approving \$20 million for community-based Outreach, Enrollment, Retention and Utilization (OERU) activities, and you lent your support to simplification efforts such as those outlined in SB 437. *Your line item veto in August eliminated these advances.*

Grass roots and community based organizations make up the state's OERU efforts. We work to prevent families from falling through the cracks by facilitating the enrollment and retention of eligible but uninsured children and families and we make insurance cards work for people who do carry them. Enrollment and retention in healthcare coverage has been proven effective in improving the health status and reducing the financial liability of an uninsured population on both the public and private health care systems.

Your veto means that this year alone in Los Angeles County, 25,000 low-income children and their family members who are eligible for health coverage will not be provided with application assistance. In my work as a Certified Application Assistant, every day I assist low-income families to successfully enroll, maintain and use their health care coverage. I know that OERU assistance is critical to the success of meaningful health coverage. Without these types of assistance, the impact of any health care expansion efforts will be seriously weakened.

I ask for your leadership to:

- Expand health coverage for children, their parents and ALL Californians
- Reinstate Outreach, Enrollment, Retention and Utilization Funding
- Promote system simplifications, such as CHDP Gateway improvements, SB 24 Prenatal and Newborn Hospital Gateways, and SB 437, that will help to accurately and quickly enroll hundreds of thousands of children and pregnant women.
- Help ensure adequate SCHIP reauthorization funding and address problematic administrative and citizenship documentation issues (DRA), to protect tens of thousands of children covered by Children's Health Insurance from the risk of losing their coverage in 2008 and 2009.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

cc: Speaker of the Assembly Fabian Nunez
Senate Pro Tem Don Perata