

## SCHIP Messages/Talking Points

### Proactive Messages – Republican House Override Targets

**By vetoing strong legislation to cover 3-4 million uninsured children, President Bush has confirmed how out of touch he is with Republican voters, ignoring the will of a bipartisan majority in Congress, Governors and state leaders from both parties, and an overwhelming majority of the American people including Republican voters.**

- Nationwide polling released this week by the [Washington Post](#) confirms that, in anticipation of his veto, **President Bush's job approval rating dropped to an all-time low** of 33%. According to the same poll, **more than 80% of Americans favor the compromise children's health bill**, and Americans are **twice as likely to blame Republicans** for Congress' inability to get things done.
- The compromise bill enjoys strong support among Republican voters, as well as Republican governors. A national poll released this week by [First Focus](#) and conducted by Republican polling firm Fabrizio McLaughlin & Associates confirms that **Republican voters support the compromise bill 2 to 1**.
- A House Republican (Rep. Bobby Jindal (LA)) and Democrat (Rep. Dan Boren (OK)) who opposed the bill in September have already committed publicly that they will vote to override the president's veto. As Rep. Jindal put it, "He's wrong to veto ... it's wrong to oppose efforts to expand to cover more children."

**A strong majority of Republicans and Democrats in Congress have put the nation's interests above politics, passing a responsible, bipartisan compromise bill that offers the bare minimum state leaders need to cover 3-4 million uninsured children.**

- Delay is not an option, as more and more working families lose private insurance – the Bush Administration's own Census data confirms that there were 1,000,000 more uninsured children in America in 2006 than just two years ago.
- SCHIP has a solid, ten-year track record of covering children whose parents work but don't earn enough to keep pace with the skyrocketing price of private health insurance.

**The upcoming veto override vote offers a second chance for House Republicans to stand with children. Millions of uninsured children in America, including *NUMBER* from *STATE*, are now counting on your vote to override the President's veto and help them get the health care they need.**

- Governors of both parties, newspaper editorial boards from coast to coast, and an overwhelming majority of the American people supports a strong State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) bill.

**If you make the right choice, we can provide health coverage for 3-4 million uninsured children in America, including *NUMBER* from *STATE*. Be part of a win for America's children.**

- The American people are looking for real solutions to real problems– not political ideology and overheated rhetoric.

## Proactive Messages – Democratic House Override Targets

**By vetoing strong legislation to cover 3-4 million uninsured children, President Bush has confirmed how out of touch he is with American voters. Worse yet, a small minority of Democratic legislators sided with President Bush and opposed health coverage for uninsured children.**

- Nationwide polling released this week by the [Washington Post](#) confirms that, in anticipation of his veto, **President Bush's job approval rating dropped to an all-time low** of 33%. According to the same poll, **more than 80% of Americans favor the compromise children's health bill.**
- A House Democrat (Rep. Dan Boren (OK)) and Republican (Rep. Bobby Jindal (LA)) who opposed the bill in September have already committed publicly that they will vote to override the president's veto. As Rep. Boren put it, "I don't want to be the one to stop this program from going forward."

**A strong majority of Republicans and Democrats in Congress have put the nation's interests above politics, passing a responsible, bipartisan compromise bill that offers the bare minimum state leaders need to cover 3-4 million uninsured children.**

- Delay is not an option, as more and more working families lose private insurance – the Bush Administration's own Census data confirms that there were 1,000,000 more uninsured children in America in 2006 than just two years ago.
- SCHIP has a solid, ten-year track record of covering children whose parents work but don't earn enough to keep pace with the skyrocketing price of private health insurance.

**The upcoming veto override vote offers a second chance for you to stand with children, not President Bush. Millions of uninsured children in America, including *NUMBER* from *STATE*, are now counting on your vote to override the President's veto and help them get the health care they need.**

- Governors of both parties, newspaper editorial boards from coast to coast, and an overwhelming majority of the American people support a strong State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) bill.

**Don't be the one to stop children's coverage from going forward. If you make the right choice, we can provide health coverage for 3-4 million uninsured children in America, including *NUMBER* from *STATE*. Be part of a win for America's children.**

- The American people are looking for real solutions to real problems– not political ideology and overheated rhetoric.

## Opposition Messages

The Democrats want to undermine private coverage by expanding government programs and making them attractive for middle income families. We are about sticking to SCHIP's original intent.

**We say: This isn't about philosophy, this is about reality. In reality, private health insurance has become less available and more expensive, and more and more hardworking families have been unable to keep pace. Their reality is that the private market has failed them. For hardworking families, SCHIP is not the problem, it's the solution.**

The Democrats are playing partisan games with children's health by sending the president a bill they knew he would veto.

**We say: The bipartisan compromise bill offers the bare minimum that Republican and Democratic governors need to reduce the number of uninsured children in America by 3-4 million. The president's alternative is woefully inadequate, failing to even cover the children already enrolled in SCHIP, let alone put a dent in the 9 million uninsured kids in America. It's the president who's been playing political games.**

They say: SCHIP reauthorization sends your tax dollars to rich New Yorkers making \$80K.

**We say: As the cost of health care continues to skyrocket, states must have the flexibility to cover the uninsured children in working families -- they know their populations best. SCHIP program focuses virtually all of its resources on kids in the poorest of working families – fewer than 1 in 10 kids covered under SCHIP lives in a family of 4 earning more than \$41,000 a year.**

- As private health insurance has become less available and more expensive, more and more working families cannot afford private coverage for their children.
- Children with family incomes with incomes between 200 and 400% of the poverty line accounted for nearly half of the increase in the number of uninsured children between 2005 and 2006.
- Moderate-income families with children enrolled in SCHIP pay premiums to buy coverage for their children. Many families that turn to SCHIP to purchase affordable coverage are self-employed, work for small businesses, or otherwise lack access to employer-based insurance.
- More than 8 in 10 of the children who will qualify for coverage as a result of the compromise agreement are low-income children already eligible for SCHIP or Medicaid. These children, who are among the very lowest income children without coverage, are the ones that President Bush announced in 2004 should all be enrolled in coverage.

They say: SCHIP reauthorization will allow illegal aliens to get health care on your dime.

**We say: Undocumented immigrants have never been eligible for SCHIP and the SCHIP reauthorization legislation does not change this longstanding policy. The legislation simply reforms the ineffective and burdensome documentation requirements that have prevented thousands of U.S citizens' children from getting health care coverage while ensuring that only those legally eligible for care**

They say: SCHIP reauthorization will encourage employees to drop health coverage in favor of public programs and is part of a broader plan to expand government-run health care. We are about sticking to the intent of the program.

**We say: The biggest gains in coverage from SCHIP would be among low-income children who otherwise would be uninsured. The highly successful SCHIP program puts solving the problem of uninsured children within reach. We shouldn't let ideology derail that.**

- The existing private health insurance market has failed many working families, leaving nine million American children without health insurance. Since 2000, premiums for family coverage in employer-based plans have nearly doubled.
- Republican and Democratic governors and state legislatures have responded by investing in SCHIP's track record of success.
- SCHIP is a true public-private partnership – most states contract with private companies to provide insurance benefits to eligible children.