



Access to Health Insurance for Children

WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 children in Illinois do not have basic health insurance because their parents do not have jobs that include affordable health care benefits, or because they are not eligible for other private programs or public assistance programs; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress passed and the President signed into law the "Balanced Budget Act of 1997" which includes provisions for funding a new State Children's Health Insurance Program under a new Title XXI of the Federal Social Security Act, and \$24 billion was authorized for this purpose for at least five years to provide funds to the state for the provision of children's health insurance programs designed and administered by the states; and

WHEREAS, the formula for allocating federal funds for children's health insurance provides approximately \$122.6 million annually to Illinois, but requires a state match in the approximate amount of \$66 million in state funds; and

WHEREAS, the new program will help Illinois offer comprehensive health coverage for more than 124,000 uninsured children whose parents' income is less than 200 percent of poverty; and

WHEREAS, the Children's Health Insurance federal funds are available to States as of October 1, 1997.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago engage in policy and program initiatives to improve access to health insurance for children; and be it further RESOLVED, that Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago urge the Department of Human Services and the Illinois Department of Public Aid to collaborate in the development of a state plan to implement Title XXI of the Federal Social Security Act and that in so doing the agencies may exercise options that will implement an interim plan that will ensure immediate coverage of pregnant women, children from low income families, and children at risk who do not have other sources of insurance, while working toward a more comprehensive plan that will further expand and extend coverage to the fullest extent possible within available funds; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago urge the General Assembly of the state of Illinois to ensure that Illinois takes immediate advantage of the available federal funds by authorizing the state funds needed to draw down the federal funds; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago urge the state of Illinois to utilize 10 percent of the children's health insurance funds for community outreach and education purposes to help families learn about and apply for available programs, and to support innovative programs of outreach to uninsured children; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago urge the Illinois Department of Human Services and Public Aid seek public review and comment in the development of any interim and final plan that will implement a children's health insurance plan under Title XXI of the Social Security Act.