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NEWS RELEASE

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Washington, DC — Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, today joined a majority in the House of Representatives in support of bipartisan legislation to provide health care to more than 10 million low-income children. H.R. 3963, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization Act of 2007 was approved by a vote of 266 to 141.

Dingell delivered the following statement on the House floor today in support of the H.R. 3963:

Madame Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3963, the "Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007". This bill is an excellent bipartisan compromise. Is it perfect? No. Are there things in the bill that any one of us would change? Of course. Nevertheless, this is an enormous step forward for the health of our Nation's children.

This bill protects the health insurance coverage of some six million children who now depend on CHIP during the course of the year. The bill will also cover 3.9 million children who are today uninsured. By my addition, that's 10 million children we're caring for - a great accomplishment.

This bill also makes a number of changes to accommodate concerns raised by the President and others in his party. The bill before us will terminate the coverage of adults under the CHIP program in one year.

We will target bonus payments only to States that increase enrollment of the poorest uninsured children. We eliminate the ability of States to cover children in families with annual incomes above \$51,000. And we make sure that there are adequate enforcement tools to ensure that only citizens are covered.

This bill does right by the children. States will have new tools to find and enroll children. States will have a new option to provide health coverage to low-income uninsured pregnant women, giving more babies a healthy start. Finally, the bill includes provisions to encourage States to help low-income families secure health insurance through their employer.

This bill has the support of the private health insurance industry. It also has the support of the medical community, children's advocates, educators, organizations representing people with disabilities, health professionals, hospitals, and working families across America, not to mention the diverse organizations that have come together in support of this bill.

It is a good, bipartisan bill that addresses the concerns expressed by the President and many of my Republican colleagues, without sacrificing the important goals of providing health insurance to 10 million kids. It merits the support from all my colleagues, and I urge an "aye" vote on H.R. 3963.

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Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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