

Dingell, Pallone Decry Bush Administration Rejection of New York Children's Health Plan

Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, today denounced the Bush administration's decision to reject New York's State Plan Amendment (SPA) for its Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

NEWS RELEASE

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Washington, D.C. - Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, today denounced the Bush administration's decision to reject New York's State Plan Amendment (SPA) for its Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Earlier today, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) sent a letter to the State of New York Department of Health rejecting New York's SPA, which would have increased the CHIP eligibility level from at or below 250 percent of the Federal poverty level (FPL) to at or above 400 percent of the FPL.

In rejecting the plan, CMS cited new administration requirements announced last month that restrict flexibility at the state level. On August 17, CMS outlined new conditions that states must comply with before providing health coverage to certain populations of low-income children under CHIP.

"At a time when Congress is working to reauthorize CHIP to reduce the growing number of uninsured children, I am saddened to see the Administration taking yet another step that would deny quality, affordable health coverage to the most vulnerable among us," said Dingell. "I urge the President to stop playing politics and start working with Congress to protect the health of our children."

"The Bush administration's mean-spirited campaign to deny health insurance to children should be rejected," Pallone said. "I am particularly concerned that CMS used its new requirements, which were implemented without consultation of Congress or the states that operate these programs, to reject New York's plan. States like New York need the flexibility to raise the eligibility level in order to meet the health care needs of their children."

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