Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 27, 2007

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Governor Sarah Palin
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Governor John Huntsman
Utah

Governor James H. Douglas
Vermont

Governor M. Michael Rounds
South Dakota

Dear Governor,

As Members of Congress who voted in favor of the reauthorization of the SCHIP program, we urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to contact President Bush to ask him drop his veto threat and sign H.R. 976, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization Act of 2007.

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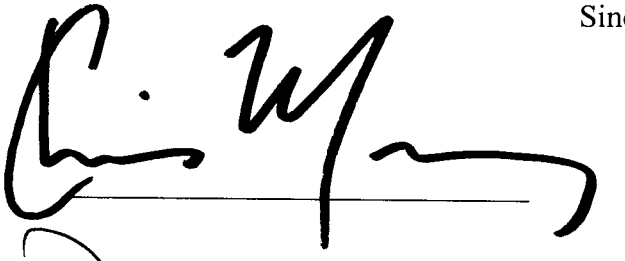
H.R. 976 is bipartisan legislation which renews and improves the CHIP, investing an additional $35 billion over five years to provide health care coverage for more than 10 million children – preserving coverage for all 6.6 million children currently covered by CHIP and extending coverage to 3.8 million children who are currently uninsured, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. It also provides incentives for states to lower the rate of uninsured children by enrolling eligible children in CHIP and Medicaid, including providing bonus payments. States will receive state-based allotments that are responsive to state demographic and national spending trends. States that face a funding shortfall and meet enrollment goals will receive an adjustment payment to ensure that no child who is eligible for Medicaid or CHIP is denied coverage or placed on a waiting list.

This legislation also replaces the August 17 letter to states from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services which restrained our state's ability to cover children above 250 percent of poverty. While the bill states that it agrees with the President on the importance of ensuring that low-income children have health coverage and taking steps to address substitution of private coverage, it gives states time and assistance in developing and implementing best practices to address substitution of coverage.

Congress passed the reauthorization of SCHIP by a broad, bipartisan margin in both houses. Despite this, the President continues his stubborn insistence on vetoing this crucial legislation. As a Republican Governor you are in a unique position to call on the President and urge him to drop his ill-conceived veto threat.

The time to do so is now.

Sincerely,



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