

By: Turner

H.C.R. No. 126

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Created in 1997, the State Children's Health  
2 Insurance Program (SCHIP) was established to provide health  
3 coverage to low-income children in families who are not eligible  
4 for Medicaid and has since become a crucial component of the  
5 nation's health care safety net; according to the United States  
6 Government Accountability Office, SCHIP covered more than five  
7 million children nationwide in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2005; and

8 WHEREAS, The appeal of the program can be attributed  
9 primarily to the unfortunate fact that so many American families  
10 are in desperate need of health coverage; one-third of the  
11 population under 65 went without health insurance for some or all of  
12 2002 and 2003, and in 2004, 15.7 percent of the nation's total  
13 population was without health coverage, including 8.3 million  
14 uninsured children; and

15 WHEREAS, The situation in Texas is even worse; the United  
16 States Census Bureau reports that the state has consistently  
17 experienced a 60 percent higher rate of uninsured individuals than  
18 the rest of the country; moreover, in 2005, 25.1 percent of the  
19 state's total population had no health insurance and 43.4 percent  
20 of Texans under the age of 65 went without health coverage at some  
21 point during all or part of 2002 and 2003; and

22 WHEREAS, The problem is statewide in scope; although five  
23 counties--Harris, Dallas, Bexar, Tarrant, and El Paso--account for  
24 nearly half of the state's uninsured, many rural counties are

1 experiencing growing populations of uninsured; and

2 WHEREAS, The lack of health coverage is not just a matter of  
3 affordability; in Texas, 79 percent of the uninsured are employed  
4 but work where employer-sponsored health insurance is not available  
5 and, according to the Task Force for Access to Health Care in Texas,  
6 many Texas industries are actually reducing health coverage to  
7 their employees; and

8 WHEREAS, SCHIP was specifically designed to address the  
9 limited availability of health coverage and help states provide  
10 inexpensive preventive care to children in order to moderate  
11 costlier medical interventions later in life; but in the face of  
12 this insurance crisis, SCHIP is scheduled to sunset in August 2007,  
13 and funding for the program must be reauthorized by the United  
14 States Congress; and

15 WHEREAS, The original authorization for SCHIP included an  
16 allocation of approximately \$40 billion to be distributed over 10  
17 years, but by 2002 many states were projecting that their programs  
18 would exceed their allotments; acknowledging the value of SCHIP,  
19 congress appropriated an additional \$283 million for the program in  
20 FFY 2006; and

21 WHEREAS, With growing numbers of the uninsured and the  
22 program's obvious success, the importance of SCHIP to the children  
23 of Texas and the nation cannot be overstated; having previously  
24 acted to sustain SCHIP funding and thereby recognizing the  
25 program's significance to the health of our nation, it is  
26 appropriate that congress reauthorize SCHIP funding as quickly as  
27 possible; now, therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas  
2 hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to  
3 timely reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program;  
4 and, be it further

5           RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official  
6 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, the  
7 speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the  
8 senate of the United States Congress, and all members of the Texas  
9 delegation to the congress with the request that this resolution be  
10 officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the  
11 Congress of the United States of America.