



## The Massachusetts Chapter

### **Executive Director**

Cathleen Haggerty  
860 Winter Street  
Waltham, MA 02454  
781-895-9852  
Fax 781-895-9855  
chaggerty@mcaap.org

### **Immediate Past President**

Gregory Hagan, M.D., FAAP  
Cambridge, MA  
617-665-3600  
gnhagan@challiance.org

### **President**

John O'Reilly, M.D., FAAP  
Springfield, MA  
413-794-7448  
joreilly@mcaap.org

### **Vice President**

Michael McManus, M.D., MPH, FAAP  
Boston, MA  
617-355-6000  
mmcmanus@mcaap.org

### **Treasurer**

Dmitry Dukhovny, M.D., FAAP  
Boston, MA  
617-355-6000  
ddukhovny@mcaap.org

### **Secretary**

Kathryn Brigham, M.D., FAAP  
Boston, MA  
617-355-6000  
kbrigham@mcaap.org

### **District Representatives**

#### **District 1**

Fernando Catalina, M.D., FAAP

#### **District 2**

Safdar Medina, M.D., FAAP

#### **District 3**

Lloyd Fisher, M.D., FAAP

#### **District 4**

Elizabeth Goodman, M.D., FAAP

#### **District 5**

Sheila Morehouse, M.D., FAAP

#### **District 6**

Brittany Boulanger, M.D., FAAP

#### **District 7**

Umbereen Nehal, M.D., MPH, FAAP

#### **District 8**

Allison Brown, M.D., FAAP

#### **District 9**

Walter Rok, M.D., FAAP

April 22, 2014

The Honorable Deval Patrick  
Massachusetts Governor  
Massachusetts State House  
Office of the Governor  
Room 105  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

As state advocates concerned about the health and well-being of Massachusetts' children and families, we are writing to thank you for your efforts to improve health coverage for our children and to urge you to take action to ensure continued federal funding for the Massachusetts' Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Since 1997 when CHIP was enacted with strong bipartisan support, it has helped children in working families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to afford private health insurance. In fact, CHIP has helped to cut the number of low-income, uninsured children across the country by an astounding 50%, from 25% in 1997 to 13% in 2012, while improving health outcomes and access to care for children and pregnant women.<sup>i</sup>

Thanks to leaders like you, 98% of children in Massachusetts were insured in 2012—a record high. MassHealth is a major part of this success story, providing health coverage to 145,203 Massachusetts children (in 2012). MassHealth also offers vital prenatal and preventive services for pregnant women, helping ensure the best possible birth outcomes for children and averting costs associated with poor birth outcomes.

CHIP provides states with significant design flexibility to meet the needs of their populations. This unique structure has helped states tackle the costs of uncompensated care while reducing the numbers of uninsured children and pregnant women. At the same time, because CHIP is a program designed specifically for children, its benefit design and provider network are tailored to meet their unique needs. The public, in poll after poll, express overwhelming support for protecting the program and keeping it strong.

Continued federal funding for Massachusetts is essential to continue this positive coverage trend for children. Though Congress has authorized the program through federal fiscal year 2019, federal funding for the program is set to expire on October 1, 2015. As our state adjusts to a variety of health system changes, it is essential that Congress secures CHIP's future so that children who depend on it remain insured. If Congress doesn't act, more than 7.8 million children—more than 50% of those insured by CHIP—would lose their coverage by 2016. Likewise, pregnant women enrolled in CHIP could be left without other sources of prenatal care, jeopardizing the health of their newborns. We fear that, without CHIP, our state's uninsured rate would increase significantly and the health of children and families in Massachusetts would be in jeopardy.

Governor Patrick, we respectfully ask that you reach out to our congressional delegation today to let them know why CHIP is so critically important to our state. Please ask members of Congress to support extending CHIP funding beyond federal fiscal year 2015. Your support of MassHealth has been and will remain critical to its ongoing success and to the health and well-being of the children and pregnant women in this great state.

Sincerely,



John O'Reilly, M.D., FAAP

President, the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

---

<sup>i</sup> Children's Health Coverage on the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CHIPRA, February 4, 2014

[http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/2014/CHIPRA\\_5thAnniversary/ib\\_CHIPRA5thanniversary.pdf](http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/2014/CHIPRA_5thAnniversary/ib_CHIPRA5thanniversary.pdf)