

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 28, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi,

As members of Congress committed to improving the lives of children and families, we write to urge swift action on the extension of federal funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

As you know, federal funding for CHIP is set to expire on September 30, 2017. In light of this swiftly approaching deadline, Pennsylvania state officials have projected they will fully exhaust their CHIP funds by February 2018 without Congressional action.

In Pennsylvania, more than 176,000 children have gained access to affordable, comprehensive health care coverage through CHIP, which provides them with age appropriate medical and developmental care. Since the program became law the percentage of uninsured children nationwide has decreased by more than half, from 13.9 percent in 1997 to 6.6 percent in 2016. As a result of its reliability and effectiveness, CHIP has consistently enjoyed strong bipartisan support.

Ensuring that children have access to high-quality health insurance coverage during their formative years yields an abundance of positive outcomes. Research suggests that children insured through CHIP are more likely to complete college, maximize their earning power, and experience better health outcomes as adults, with fewer hospitalizations.

We believe it is additionally important to take into consideration the resources CHIP can provide to children affected by the opioid crisis. In Pennsylvania alone, close to 800 cases of neonatal abstinence syndrome, a condition caused by the maternal use of prescription or illicit drugs during pregnancy, were reported between January 2005 and December 2014. This statistic confirms that a growing number of newborns and children are experiencing difficulty sleeping, extreme irritability, slow weight gain, and persistent seizures. We believe it to be incumbent

upon this body to ensure that supports remain in place for these children, while we work to address the opioid epidemic.

To provide certainty and security for children, parents, and providers, we urge a bipartisan agreement to bring CHIP extension legislation to the floor for consideration as soon as possible.

Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to this country. We look forward to your reply.

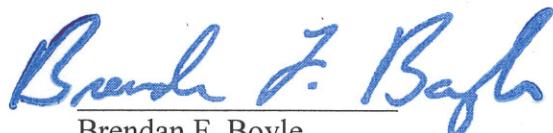
Sincerely,



Glenn 'GT' Thompson
Member of Congress



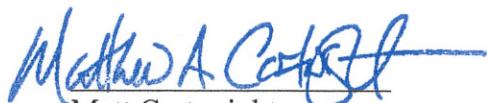
Lou Barletta
Member of Congress



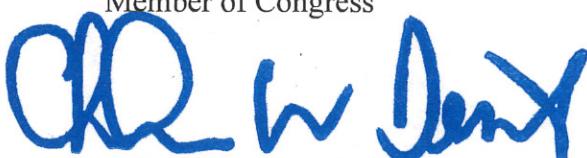
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress



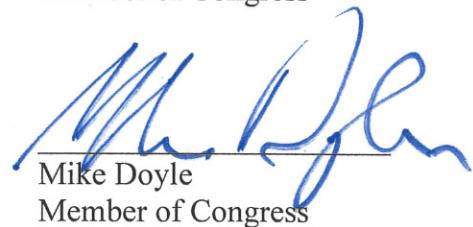
Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress



Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress



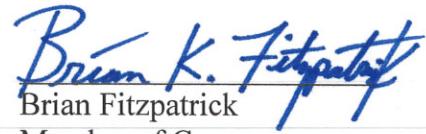
Ryan A. Costello
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



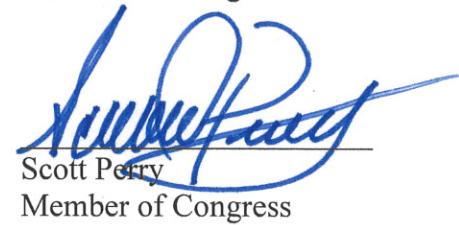
Mike Kelly
Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



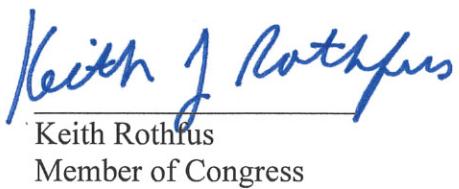
Patrick Meehan
Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress



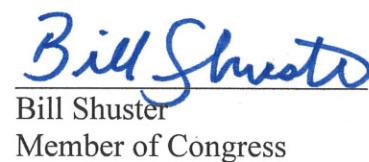
Tim Murphy
Tim Murphy
Member of Congress



Scott Perry
Scott Perry
Member of Congress



Keith J. Rothfus
Keith Rothfus
Member of Congress



Bill Shuster
Bill Shuster
Member of Congress



Lloyd Smucker
Lloyd Smucker
Member of Congress