

House Memorial

A memorial to the Congress of the United States,
 urging Congress to pass appropriate legislation to
 extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance
 Program in Florida through fiscal year 2019.

WHEREAS, approximately 250,000 children in Florida
 currently receive comprehensive health and dental insurance
 through Florida KidCare, the state's nationally recognized
 program authorized by law to implement the Children's Health
 Insurance Program (CHIP) in Florida, and

WHEREAS, CHIP is composed of the Florida Healthy Kids
 Corporation, MediKids, and Children's Medical Services, three
 components of Florida KidCare that provide health and dental
 insurance specifically designed for children, and

WHEREAS, because Florida offers this quality, affordable
 insurance option, eligible families are able to receive
 comprehensive health and dental insurance for their children for
 under \$20 dollars per month, and

WHEREAS, CHIP provides year-round open enrollment and
 offers provider networks focused on pediatric care that are more
 affordable than insurance plans currently offered in the
 Federally Facilitated Marketplace, and

WHEREAS, Florida families who have easy access to quality,
 affordable children's health care are more likely to use
 preventive health services, thus lowering the likelihood of

27 | these families being absent from school or work and increasing
 28 | educational and professional productivity, and

29 | WHEREAS, due to CHIP's long history of success, the program
 30 | has experienced 6 consecutive years of increased enrollment,
 31 | helping reduce Florida's rate of uninsured children from 16.7
 32 | percent to 11.1 percent, and

33 | WHEREAS, despite CHIP's progress in significantly reducing
 34 | the number of uninsured children in Florida, and its
 35 | authorization under state law to continue operating through
 36 | fiscal year 2019, federal funding for CHIP will expire on
 37 | September 30, 2015, unless funding is extended by the United
 38 | States Congress, and

39 | WHEREAS, if CHIP funding is not extended, many low-income
 40 | families in Florida will not be able to afford health insurance
 41 | for their children through the Federally Facilitated
 42 | Marketplace, where annual out-of-pocket costs can be as much as
 43 | six times more than CHIP's, and tens of thousands of children
 44 | currently enrolled in the program, including especially
 45 | vulnerable children with chronic or ongoing medical or
 46 | behavioral needs, will likely become uninsured, and

47 | WHEREAS, if CHIP funding is extended, Florida's annual
 48 | share of the CHIP program cost will be reduced from \$80 million
 49 | to \$20 million because of enhanced federal matching funds
 50 | scheduled to take effect October 1, 2015, and Florida will
 51 | continue to make great strides toward the ultimate goal of
 52 | insuring every child living in Florida, NOW, THEREFORE,

HM 857

2015

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54 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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56 That the Congress of the United States is urged to pass
57 appropriate legislation to extend funding for the Children's
58 Health Insurance Program in Florida through fiscal year 2019.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
60 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
61 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
62 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
63 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.