



Media Release
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Governor Ritter and the Colorado General Assembly Score a Win for Colorado Kids:
House Bill 1293 ensures uninterrupted health care services for children and their families

Denver —April 21, 2009 —Today, Governor Bill Ritter signed into law the Colorado Health Care Affordability Act, House Bill 1293, sponsored by State Representative Jim Riesberg and Senator Betty Boyd. Included in the measure is the expansion of health coverage for children and the elimination of a significant barrier to public assistance programs, which will ensure continuous enrollment for families.

“Colorado is a leader in covering kids. Nearly 8 out of 10 children have health insurance. Yet, more than 153,000 kids are still uninsured – enough to fill every seat in Invesco Field two times over,” said Deb Colburn, Executive Director of the Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved and Chair of the All Kids Covered Initiative. “At a time when families are losing their health coverage, we are grateful for Governor Ritter’s leadership in taking this critical step towards improving access to care.”

The Colorado Health Care Affordability Act will provide health insurance coverage to more than 100,000 Coloradans and will reduce uncompensated care and cost shifting. By partnering with hospitals, the measure enables the state to generate an additional \$600 million a year through a provider fee, and draw down \$600 million in federal Medicaid matching funds, including support for the Child Health Plan *Plus* program.

Megan Ferland, President of the Colorado Children’s Campaign and Partner in the All Kids Covered Initiative, added, “With this measure, Governor Ritter and the General Assembly continue to make real progress towards providing quality, affordable care to those in need, including coverage for up to 21,000 more children in our state. The Colorado Health Care Affordability Act is the right thing at the right time for families who are struggling.”

The measure expands health coverage and reduces barriers for Colorado kids in the following ways:

- By offering continuous coverage for children enrolled in the State’s Medical Assistance Program, the Colorado Health Care Affordability Act ensures uninterrupted access to health care services for kids.
- By increasing the eligibility level for children and parents, House Bill 1293 provides more families access to public health programs, such as the Children’s Basic Health Plan.

“Colorado parents work hard to give their kids what they need, but for working families, health coverage is becoming less available and more expensive. The Colorado Health Care Affordability Act gives our children better access to needed medical services. On behalf of the thousands of kids served, we thank Governor Ritter, Representative Riesberg, Senator Boyd, and the Colorado General Assembly,” concluded Gordon Duvall, Board Chair for the Metro Organizations for People and Partner in the All Kids Covered Initiative.

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All Kids Covered is a statewide collaborative that strives to reduce enrollment barriers to public health insurance programs for eligible children, increase access to public programs, and improve the quality of services so that Colorado kids reach their fullest potential. Organizations leading the All Kids Covered Initiative include Colorado Children’s Campaign, the Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved, Colorado Covering Kids and Families, and Metro Organizations for People.