



National Association of Health Underwriters

America's Benefits Specialists

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SCHIP Reauthorization Compromise Improves Premium Assistance For Employer-Sponsored Coverage

(Arlington, VA) – The National Association of Health Underwriters (NAHU) praises House and Senate negotiators for including enhancements for premium assistance in their efforts to reauthorize and improve the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). SCHIP is a state administered "safety net" for children whose parents make too much to qualify for Medicaid, but may need assistance to afford private health insurance.

“The Children’s Health Insurance Reauthorization Act of 2007 (H.R. 976) contains innovative provisions that maximize SCHIP dollars and enhance beneficiary care and access through better integration with existing private sector health insurance coverage,” stated Janet Trautwein, NAHU CEO and EVP. *“H.R. 976 takes specific steps to improve the premium assistance process for states to voluntarily use SCHIP dollars to subsidize and leverage employer-sponsored coverage so that more families can be covered together at potentially lower costs. Many parents of SCHIP-eligible children have access to employer-sponsored health insurance coverage but cannot afford their portion of the dependent premiums. This bill will make the process for states to voluntarily use SCHIP dollars to subsidize employer-sponsored coverage much simpler, so that more families can be covered together under the same private market plan.*

“Allowing states to pursue innovative and cost-efficient partnerships with the existing private insurance market is an important foundation for ensuring that SCHIP works to combine the best that the public and private sectors have to offer. NAHU believes that the inclusion of premium assistance improvements will go a long way toward leveraging premium dollars that employers are willing to contribute toward family coverage while helping to ease budgetary pressures on SCHIP.

“We look forward to our continued work with members of Congress and the Administration on the improved SCHIP program to ensure that the program lives up to its fullest potential.”

The National Association of Health Underwriters represents more than 20,000 professional health insurance agents and brokers who provide insurance for millions of Americans. NAHU is headquartered in Arlington, VA. For more information, visit our web site at www.nahu.org.

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