

*President Obama to sign SCHIP into law this afternoon* Washington, DC – Today, U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) voted in favor of final passage of the reauthorization of the State Children Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to provide healthcare coverage to 11 million American children. The House of Representatives today passed H.R. 2, the Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, by a vote of 290-135. According to the Congressional Research Service, this bipartisan bill will preserve coverage for 63,090 Oregon children currently enrolled in SCHIP and could add an additional 42,700 uninsured children in Oregon. With this reauthorization Oregon would see a 40 percent reduction in the number of uninsured children.

“At a time when Oregon families are struggling with rising costs of healthcare and rising unemployment causing a loss of employee sponsored healthcare, we can provide a signal of hope and a source of relief,” said Rep. Blumenauer. “After three years of working to pass this bill, after three years of fighting for the health and future of America’s children, our new president will finally sign this bill into law today and bring our nation one step closer to providing quality, affordable healthcare for all Americans.”

The State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) was created in 1997 to provide health care coverage for children in families that earn too little to afford health insurance for their children themselves but too much to qualify for Medicaid. This bill will give states the resources and incentives necessary to reach and cover millions of uninsured children who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in, SCHIP and Medicaid. The bill is fully paid for – raising the tobacco tax by 62 cents.

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