

Washington, DC – Today Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore) issued the following statement in response to the failed override of the President’s veto of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which would provide 10 million low-income children with health insurance:

“I was angered and dismayed when the President vetoed the popular, bipartisan health insurance program, and today I am simply baffled that so many Republicans would follow their leader down his path of lies and deceit,” said Congressman Blumenauer.

“Vetoing a popular children’s health insurance program on the merits of fiscal conservatism is a new low even for our misguided President and his Republican followers. For the cost of 41 days in Iraq, we could have helped millions of working families insure their kids – including 90,000 in Oregon alone!

“The facts should have been enough to override the President’s veto, but a majority of Republicans stonewalled our bipartisan efforts and instead chose to play politics with our children’s lives. It is truly a sad day for the state of our country when providing health care to kids falls by the wayside in favor of overspending on a misguided war.”

This bipartisan SCHIP bill preserves coverage for the 6.6 million kids currently covered by SCHIP and provides funding for an additional 3.8 million kids who are currently uninsured but eligible. In Oregon, this would mean health coverage for almost 90,000 children – 52,000 who are currently covered under SCHIP and an additional 37,000 who would benefit from the program.

Since it was created in 1997, SCHIP has always received strong bipartisan support. It was created to provide health care coverage for children in families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to afford private insurance. Over the last ten years, SCHIP has proven to be a popular, successful program – with 6.6 million children now enrolled in the program.

It costs less than \$3.50 a day to cover a child through SCHIP. Insuring kids is also

cost-effective for taxpayers who pick up the tab for indigent care in emergency rooms – the most expensive way to care for a child's health.

The bipartisan SCHIP reauthorization bill also has broad bipartisan support from:

- o 68 Senators, including 18 Republicans

- o 43 Governors, including 16 Republicans

- o More than 270 organizations

- o 81% of the American public, according to a recent CBS poll