

American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

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Contact: Erin Wallace (202-294-4632, ewallace@aap.org)

Jamie Poslosky (202-294-5263, jposlosky@aap.org)

Press Statement on FINAL PASSAGE OF HEALTH REFORM LEGISLATION

By: Judith S. Palfrey, MD, FAAP, President, American Academy of Pediatrics

“The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which represents 60,000 pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and surgical specialists, commends the United States Senate and House of Representatives for their historic votes today to pass the final component of comprehensive health reform legislation. The AAP applauds Congress for its landmark votes and steadfast commitment to passing significant health reform legislation.

“It is a new day in America. Congress’ passage of health reform will change the lives of countless Americans, and will go far in ensuring that our children can grow up healthy and strong. The AAP has been working for decades to keep children’s health needs our highest national priority, and this legislation directly reflects the tireless advocacy of AAP leadership and members on behalf of children and pediatricians.

“Together, the recently enacted health reform law and the reconciliation package will benefit children and the pediatricians who care for them, which is why the Academy endorsed the legislation last week. The health reform package provides age-appropriate benefits to all children in a medical home: All *Bright Futures* services—the definitive standard of pediatric well-child and preventive care—will now be covered for children with private and public insurance as an immediate benefit for no co-pay. There is also a new commitment in Medicaid to help fund the medical home, and health reform ensures health care coverage for children in the United States, including young people up to age 26.

“In addition, the reconciliation package will improve Medicaid payment to a floor of 100 percent of Medicare payment for preventive services codes for physicians with a pediatric designation starting in 2013. For the first time ever, there will be a new federal investment of \$8.3 billion over ten years, a historic new step in improving Medicaid payment rates.

“These reforms will improve the health care access, benefits and coverage of all children in the United States and will allow pediatricians to better provide comprehensive health services to the children who need care the most. The Academy also appreciates new clarification from Congress and the Obama Administration regarding the elimination of pre-existing conditions exclusions for children. Many sick children will receive health insurance due to this policy.

“The passage of health reform is a significant investment in the health and future of our children. They will inherit the very system we are working to reform, and tonight’s final vote on health reform legislation marks a changed national commitment to the health and well-being of our children. The AAP extends thanks to President Barack Obama and the United States Congress for continuing to make the life success of every child our nation’s highest priority. We look forward to working with the President and Congress to implement these critical provisions to children’s health.”

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The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.