



**National Association of  
Community Health Centers, Inc.**

April 27, 2007

The Honorable Fortney "Pete" Stark  
United States House of Representatives  
239 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John D. Rockefeller  
United States Senate  
531 Senate Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rockefeller and Congressman Stark:

On behalf of the National Association of Community Health Centers, the voice for our nation's Community, Migrant, Homeless and Public Housing Health Centers, and the 16 million underserved people cared for by them, I am writing to offer our strong endorsement of your legislation, the MediKids Health Insurance Act of 2007, to provide health insurance for every child in the United States. There are millions of children in this country without health care coverage, and your legislation will help to ensure that they, some of our nation's most vulnerable, have access to the important medical services and care they need.

Numerous studies indicate that children who lack insurance or who do not have a regular source of primary and preventive care often use inappropriate, more expensive services and have more serious health conditions than other children. To be sure, covering children is relatively inexpensive, and it can save both their families and taxpayers by reducing the use of costly, avoidable specialty and inpatient care.

Today, Health Centers play an essential role in caring for the nation's low-income children, by serving as health care homes to nearly 6 million medically underserved children each year (one of every four low-income children in America). In addition, Health Centers play an important role in helping more eligible, uninsured children enroll in Medicaid and SCHIP. As such, these centers are deeply committed to ensuring access to affordable health care for the most vulnerable in our society, particularly children, and are strongly supportive of efforts, such as your "MediKids" legislation, aimed at covering the health needs of each and every child in the nation.

It is in this context, therefore, that we are pleased by many aspects of your legislation which are entirely consistent with our own principles. In fact, your legislation is especially important to the 800,000 migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their children cared for by health centers. Nearly all of these children are eligible for Medicaid or SCHIP coverage. However, many of them remain completely uninsured because significant barriers prevent them from enrolling in public health insurance programs for which they are eligible. Your legislation corrects this problem by ensuring these children have access to the care they need.

Health Centers are grateful for your leadership and commitment on this important effort. We are proud to endorse and offer our support for your legislation, and we stand ready to assist you in helping to achieve its enactment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel R. Hawkins, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Daniel R. Hawkins, Jr.  
Vice President for Federal, State, and Public Affairs

cc: West Virginia Primary Care Association  
California Primary Care Association