

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell and the House today passed bipartisan House-Senate agreement on the State Children’s Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP, Reauthorization, setting the stage for 82,600 new Arizona children to become eligible for health insurance coverage by 2012.

The SCHIP agreement passed the House with a strong, bipartisan 265 to 159 vote.

“This bipartisan agreement represents a growing consensus that it is a moral imperative to make sure our children have access to adequate health care,” said Mitchell. “High health insurance costs are making it increasingly difficult for two-income families to afford insurance for their kids.”

According to the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), more than 65,000 low-income children and more than 14,000 parents receive health insurance through Arizona’s KidsCare program.

“There are significant consequences when children don’t receive adequate medical care,” said Mitchell. “When children don’t have adequate health care, a minor illness can turn into something more serious, and parents are forced to take their kids to the emergency room. As a former teacher, I know that sick children miss school and that often has a negative impact on how children perform in school.”

The Arizona Daily Star [recently opined](#) , “A much-needed and effective federal health-insurance program for children will end Sept. 30 unless Congress takes action and the White House moves off its ideological pedestal to do what is right for kids....Here we are, days before the State Children’s Health Insurance Program expires, and our elected representatives are locked in a political battle over which children should be covered, who should pay for it and how to protect the private medical insurance marketplace.” [Source:

[Arizona Daily Star](#)  
, Sept. 22, 2007]

The Star noted that “Prominent Republicans, including Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch, have gone on record supporting the compromise. This is not a Democratic endeavor; it’s a bipartisan endeavor to save SCHIP for the kids now on it and to cover other kids who need it.” [Source:

[Arizona Daily Star](#)  
, Sept. 22, 2007]