

American Academy of Pediatrics,  
Washington Chapter

American Lung Association of  
Washington

American Diabetes Association  
Cedar River Group  
Children's Alliance  
Children's Home Society of  
Washington

Children's Hospital and Regional  
Medical Center

CHOICE Regional Health Network  
Communities Connect  
Community Health Network of  
Washington  
Community Health Plan  
Group Health Cooperative  
King County Project Access  
Inland Northwest Health Services  
Lutheran Public Policy Office of  
Washington State

March of Dimes, Washington State  
Chapter

Mary Bridge Children's Hospital

Molina Healthcare of Washington

National Association of Pediatric  
Nurse Practitioners, WA Chapter  
National Association of Social  
Workers, Washington State  
Chapter

Northwest Health Law Advocates  
Northwest International Health  
Action Coalition  
Public Health - Seattle & King  
County

Sacred Heart Children's Hospital  
Swedish Medical Center  
School Nurse Organization of  
Washington

Service Employees International  
Union 1199 NW  
Solid Ground

Statewide Poverty Action Network  
Washington Association of  
Churches  
Washington Association of  
Community and Migrant Health  
Centers

Washington Community Action  
Network  
Washington Dental Service  
Foundation

Washington Health Foundation  
Washington State Nurses  
Association  
Washington State Hospital  
Association

Washington State Labor Council,  
AFL-CIO

Washington State Oral Health  
Coalition

WithinReach (*formerly Healthy  
Mothers, Healthy Babies*)  
Yakima County Health Care  
Coalition

# Health Coalition for Children and Youth

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**For More Information**  
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## Unified Front Cheers Gregoire's Decision To Take Legal Action Against Feds

Seattle -- Today, individuals and organizations in the trenches of Washington State's fight to insure all children applauded the decision by Governor Christine Gregoire to file suit against the federal government.

The legal action – announced at a press conference in Olympia – seeks to overturn federal 'guidance' that was handed down via letter from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). The letter, sent August 17, 2007 to state health officers across the nation, outlines stringent new rules for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) that never went through the formal federal rule-making process.

The Bush Administration directive requires states currently covering or planning to cover children above 250% of Federal Poverty Level (about \$51,000 annually for a family of four) to achieve 95% enrollment of kids below 200% FPL (about \$41,000 annually for a family of four), requires children to go without coverage for an entire year to enroll in SCHIP, and implement cost sharing at levels comparable to private insurance options in that state. Washington and other states report they will be unable to comply with these requirements.

Members of Washington State's Health Coalition for Children and Youth believe strongly that these requirements are reckless and unreasonable for states to meet. They firmly agree with Governor Gregoire that fully implementing them would increase the number of uninsured low-income children. The Coalition points to research proving that children who receive cost effective care in a medical home are more likely to access all necessary and appropriate care including well child visits and immunizations that keep children healthy and prevent future illnesses and costly emergency care.

While the hope of coalition members remains in ultimate passage of a comprehensive SCHIP bill, all support the Governor's action as a necessary step at this point in time.

Below you will find statements from an array of individuals and organizations in support of Governor Gregoire's actions:

"We applaud Governor Gregoire for once again standing up for Washington's kids. If Washington State allowed the Bush administration's policies to prevail, we'd condemn thousands of kids in our state to a childhood without health care. That's not acceptable and certainly would derail our state's progress in achieving coverage for all kids by 2010."

**Jon Gould, Deputy Director  
Children's Alliance**

"We applaud the Governor for taking a bold stand to protect Washington's children. Hospitals are particularly appalled at the notion that the CMS directive requires children to be uninsured for a full year before getting health coverage. This wrongheaded policy ensures that instead of being healthy, children will be relegated to the emergency room for the most expensive, most stressful care possible."

**Leo Greenawalt, President  
Washington State Hospital Association**

"Ensuring that all kids have access to high-quality health care is simply the right thing to do. The CMS-directed one-year waiting period will actually force children to forgo well-child, preventative, and dental care that would mean better health in the long run. I applaud Governor Gregoire for fighting to give our nation's kids a better chance."

**Scott Armstrong, President and CEO  
Group Health Cooperative**

"The health care providers across Washington's community health center system know firsthand the benefits of insuring children and families. As the health care home to *half* of the State's uninsured children we see improved health outcomes and healthier communities when kids have coverage. Governor Gregoire understands this as well and deserves our thanks for standing up on behalf of children in communities across the United States."

**Rebecca Kavoussi, Director of Public Policy and State Programs  
Community Health Network of Washington**

"Seattle Children's Hospital thanks Governor Gregoire once again for stepping up to do what is right for the health of children and the future of Washington State. We fully support this measure aimed at protecting children across the nation by providing them with the health care they need when they need it."

**Tom Hansen, MD, CEO  
Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center**

"The State Children's Health Insurance Program legislation was a big step forward in providing appropriate, timely, and cost-effective healthcare for children. The pediatricians of Washington State are now recognizing an attack on this legislation on two fronts. Not only is there a threatened presidential veto of the renewal of this important program, but there has also been instruction from the President's appointed staff to severely restrict the use of SCHIP funds in our state. Instead of allowing the states leeway in determining eligibility for the program, unrealistic expectations have been proposed to limit the use of these funds. The requirement of 1 year of uninsured status for children before eligibility ignores the reality of the day to day life of ordinary citizens who are at risk of losing their job and insurance status at any moment. Fortunately, Governor Gregoire understands these issues very well and is doing everything in her power to encourage the Federal Government to make the right decision for children and for all of us as well. We strongly support her efforts in these endeavors."

**Neil Kaneshiro, MD, President  
Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics**

"The Washington State Labor Council welcomes the Governor's defense of our efforts to cover all kids, and her willingness to take on the Bush Administration on this issue."

**Robby Stern  
Washington State Labor Council**