



DC Action for Children

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Expansion of District's DC Healthy Families Program Will Now Cover More of the District's Low-Income Children

WASHINGTON, DC—June 12, 2007 -- The District of Columbia has increased access to its public insurance program as of June 1 giving children, who live up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, health insurance under the DC Healthy Families Program. This includes families of four whose household incomes are \$61,950 per year or less. In May 2007, the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved of the District's expansion, which will be retroactive from February 1, 2007.

"The District has pioneered progressive health access for children and their parents. This latest expansion spearheaded by Councilmember Catania means that 2,000 children will be able to get regular checkups rather than relying on ERs to deliver emergency care," comments Susie Cambria, interim executive director of DC Action for Children.

Expanding health coverage for the uninsured has been a major priority for the District. The number of adults and children enrolled in DC Healthy Families and the DC HealthCare Alliance make up approximately one-third of the District's population. The enrollment numbers demonstrate the ever-increasing eligibility of individuals for the District's Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP).

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"The expansion of the District's SCHIP program and the corresponding expansion of our Alliance program are major steps in our journey towards universal access to health care. While most states are scaling these types of programs back, we are moving forward in the District of Columbia," says David Catania, At-large DC councilmember and chairman of the Committee on Health.

The recent change to the District's Medicaid program is another effective measure for increasing access to health coverage for children whose families' household income levels previously excluded them from qualifying for public programs. Despite being employed, the cost of private insurance is often too high for many families in the District, preventing them from obtaining health coverage for themselves and their children.

ABOUT DC ACT

Since its inception in 1992, DC Action for Children has served as an independent, non-profit, multi-issue advocacy organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for children living in the District of Columbia. DC ACT's work is guided by its vision that each child in the District should be afforded the opportunity to reach his or her potential. DC ACT focuses on public policy areas, which include: early care and education, child welfare, child and maternal health and positive youth development. For more information, visit www.dckids.org.

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