

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 9, 2009

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell
Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: S.B. 18 [Delaware Healthy Children Program]

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed S.B. 18 which would remove the provision that participants in the Delaware Healthy Children Program pay a premium to participate, while allowing the Department of Health and Social Services to consider instituting minimal co-payments for health services in order to recover a portion of the revenue that would be lost due to the absence of premium payments. Removing the premium payment may reverse declining enrollment in the Program and increase the number of children in Delaware who have health insurance coverage. SCPD strongly endorses the proposed legislation.

As background, the bill is identical to S.B. 200 which was introduced in the 144th General Assembly and remained in the Senate Finance Committee as of the end of that legislative session. Attached please find a January 23, 2008 News Journal article, press release, and Fact Sheet on the predecessor bill. In a nutshell, only 45% of children in Delaware who qualify for the Delaware Healthy Children Program are actually enrolled and Delaware returns \$3 million annually to the federal government because of low participation. The program offers comprehensive health insurance, including well-care visits, hospitalization, prescription coverage, and dental care to children whose families' income is between 100% and 200% of the federal poverty level. Consistent with the attached February 5, 2009 News Journal article, the federal enabling legislation for the Delaware program was reauthorized on February 4.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position on the proposed legislation.

cc: The Honorable Jack Markell
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council