

## Advocates Press for SCHIP Support

**Contact:** Roger Martin  
Kansas Action for Children  
(785) 232-0550

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger, along with the president of the Kansas State Nurses Association and a Topeka pediatrician, will talk this week at the Statehouse about the need to bolster a federal program that provides health coverage to more than 35,000 Kansas children.

The presentation by Praeger; Dennis Cooley, a Topeka pediatrician and former president of the Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; and Ellen Carson, president of the Kansas State Nurses Association, is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Wednesday in Room 519S.

The event is being hosted by Kansas Action for Children and a coalition of more than 50 nonprofits.

The federally funded State Children's Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP, adds support to the Kansas insurance program for low-income children called HealthWave. SCHIP is up for reauthorization by the Congress this year.

Gary Brunk, president of Kansas Action for Children, said that speakers at the event will request the Kansas congressional delegation to work toward the goal of making access to health insurance for all children possible within five years.

Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius said, "It's imperative that we get the reauthorization for SCHIP at a higher level of funding so more Kansas children will be covered.

"Without increased support, thousands of Kansas children's health will be jeopardized. I applaud the coalition's efforts and our congressional delegation's support."

Brunk said that if funding isn't reauthorized, Kansas will likely face a shortfall beginning in federal fiscal year 2008, which begins October 1.

That shortfall would enlarge to \$31 million in federal fiscal year 2012, Brunk said.

National advocacy groups support SCHIP reauthorization with funding sufficient to support children who are eligible but not enrolled – not just children currently in the program.

It's estimated that that measure would cost about \$50 billion over the next five years, raising SCHIP support to \$75 billion during that span. Under the proposal now being considered, SCHIP support would rise only \$5 billion, to total funding of around \$30 billion over the five years.

The press conference will take place during Cover the Uninsured Week, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Kansas Action for Children Inc.  
720 SW Jackson | Suite 201  
Topeka, KS 66603

**P** 785-232-0550 | **F** 785-232-0699  
kac@kac.org | www.kac.org

Celebrating 25 years  
of child advocacy

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Gary Brunk

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Pat Anderson  
Margot Breckbill  
Gui Burley  
Dennis Cooley, MD  
Carol Cowden  
Tina DeLaRosa  
Sue Evans  
Judy Frick  
Susan Garlinghouse  
Rebecca Holmquist  
Jermee Jones  
Larry Kane  
Rhonda Lewis, PhD  
Martin Maldonado, MD  
Sarah Mays  
Bill McEachen, MD  
James McHenry, PhD  
Zenab Mebed  
Linda Newman  
Marge Petty  
John Poertner, PhD  
Pam Shaw, MD