



Children's Advocacy Institute

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CALIFORNIA CHILDREN DESERVE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

The nation's health care crisis is very real to California children -- more than 1.7 million of them lack any health care coverage. California now places 42nd out of the 50 states in the rate of children without health insurance. Yet children are relatively inexpensive to cover (about half of the cost of covering an adult), and dollars spent on preventive services in early childhood are highly cost-effective.

To remedy this problem, the Children's Advocacy Institute is sponsoring AB 112 (Escutia), which would provide health care coverage for uninsured children in California. "There is no excuse for children in California to lack basic health coverage," said Professor Robert C. Fellmeth, J.D., Director of the Children's Advocacy Institute at the University of San Diego School of Law. "Over 80% of these children come from the working poor, families where at least one parent is employed. Most of the rest -- about 400,000 -- already are eligible for Medi-Cal, but have not been enrolled by the state."

AB 112 would:

Expand Medi-Cal coverage to children through age 18 where the family's income does not exceed 200% of the federal poverty line, and to limited other children (in families up to 300% of the line) on a sliding scale;

Require California Department of Health Services (DHS) to streamline and improve the Medi-Cal application process for children, including simplifying and shortening the application form, permitting a mail-in application and developing a quick-response verification system; and

Require DHS to provide preventive health services coverage for any uninsured child under 18 years of age who is not eligible for Medi-Cal.

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