



# The Anti-Displacement Project

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## Springfield Woman joins Senators Kennedy and Kerry in calling for Federal Funding for Children's Health Care Kids Health a Top Priority for Massachusetts: 90% want to cover all uninsured children

**Boston** -- Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Senator John Kerry (D-MA) and Mayor Thomas Menino joined the Anti-Displacement Project (ADP), Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN), the New England Alliance for Children's Health and Children's Hospital Boston to call for more federal funding for children's health care. They released a poll showing 90% of Massachusetts voters want to provide health care coverage to all uninsured children.

*"If we invest in children's health care, we get healthy children eager to grow and learn," said MCAN Board President Diluvina Vazquez Allard. "The people of Massachusetts have spoken – they want to provide health care to all uninsured children in our state."*

Children are provided access to low-cost health coverage through MassHealth if their parents can't afford insurance and their jobs do not offer comprehensive health care benefits. MassHealth is supported by state and federal funding and premiums paid by parents based on a sliding scale. Federal funding is provided in part through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

*"No parent should have to choose between buying groceries or paying the insurance premium," said Senator Kennedy. "We should make sure that all families have the opportunity to meet the health care needs of their children."*

Senator Kennedy led bipartisan Congressional efforts to enact the law authorizing SCHIP ten years ago. SCHIP is set to expire at the end of September. Unless it is reauthorized, children's low-cost health care coverage could be in jeopardy.

Dedra Lewis and her daughter Alexsiana, of the Springfield based community organization, the Anti-Displacement Project (ADP), joined the organizations and elected officials in calling for a renewed commitment to children's health care coverage. The family faced a medical crisis while enrolled in MassHealth. Without critical medical attention for a degenerative eye condition, Alexsiana, age 9, could have lost her eyesight.

*“Without MassHealth and SCHIP, my daughter could be blind,” said Dedra Lewis. “I want to thank the Senators and my Congressman Richard Neal for working so hard to fund children’s health care coverage.”*

The Lewis family is just one of the 82,000 Massachusetts families who are currently provided with access to affordable health care coverage through SCHIP funding.

*“We need to put kids first when deciding where to spend limited federal funds,” said Senator Kerry. “SCHIP is a successful federal-state partnership and we cannot allow the federal government to renege on its end of the bargain.”*

Senator Kerry is a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee which will consider reauthorization and funding levels for SCHIP.

*“SCHIP is a healthcare success story that provides quality care to millions of children who otherwise wouldn’t receive coverage,” said Mayor Menino. “The SCHIP funding Senator Kennedy and Senator Kerry are fighting for is essential to our city’s efforts to reduce the racial and ethnic disparity in health care coverage.”*

In the poll of registered voters conducted by Lake Research Partners, more than nine in ten agreed that providing preventive health care to children and avoiding costly emergency care was a smart investment of taxpayer dollars. The poll also found that 90% of respondents see children’s health care as a growing concern as fewer companies offer health coverage for their workers and families. Support for children’s health care was found among Democrats, Republicans and Independents.

*“I commend Senator Kennedy, Senator Kerry and our entire Congressional delegation for their efforts to fund SCHIP,” said Dr. James Mandell, president and CEO of Children’s Hospital Boston. “By helping children gain access to preventive care we can help children avoid unnecessary pain and suffering.”*

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*Massachusetts Communities Action Network (MCAN) is a federation of six faith-based community improvement programs including Brockton Interfaith Community, United Interfaith Action of SE Massachusetts, Essex County Community Organization, Metropolitan Interfaith Congregations Acting for Hope, Worcester Interfaith, and Pioneer Valley Project.*

*The Anti-Displacement Project (ADP) is a low-income people’s community organization that works on such issues as health care, affordable housing, and worker & immigrant rights. ADP has converted 1,400 units of housing to permanently affordable tenant owned coops. The ADP Worker Center, Casa Obrera, recently secured \$95,000 in wage restitution for Springfield area construction workers.*

*The New England Alliance for Children’s Health is a regional coalition of consumers, health care providers, business leaders, educators, interfaith organizations and advocacy groups working to ensure that all children have access to high quality healthcare.*

*Founded in 1869 as a 20-bed hospital for children, Children’s Hospital Boston today is one of the nation’s leading pediatric medical centers, the largest provider of health care to Massachusetts children, and the primary pediatric teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. Children’s is the largest provider of care to Massachusetts children enrolled in the Medicaid and SCHIP programs, and plays an especially important role for children with special health care needs. Children’s Hospital Boston’s community service mission includes a longstanding commitment to expanding coverage for all low-income children and working families. For more information about the hospital visit: [www.childrenshospital.org/newsroom](http://www.childrenshospital.org/newsroom).*