



November 22, 2023

Governor Kathy Hochul
The Capitol
Empire State Plaza
New York, NY

Dear Governor Hochul,

The following undersigned organizations thank you for your leadership these past two years in expanding health insurance to New Yorkers, including pregnant people, older adults and working people with disabilities. Building on this important foundation, our groups respectfully urge you to consider following the leads of Oregon and Washington to ensure that no young children under the age of six lose coverage through the Medicaid and Child Health Plus (CHP) programs. We urge you to include Section 1115 Waiver authority for the Department of Health to secure continuous health coverage for New York's youngest residents. This waiver will ensure substantial matching federal funds for a low-cost policy option that will reap many benefits for our state, including:

- **Greater health equity.** Continuous coverage protections advance health equity by ensuring continuity of treatment for low-income children and children of color, who disproportionately experience health disparities.
- **Better child and family health.** Continuity of coverage supports proven pediatric interventions, including developmental screening, prevention, and family-oriented two-generation services.
- **Reduced costs for families and lower administrative costs.** Cycling on and off Medicaid/CHP burdens families with out-of-pocket expenses and stressful deadlines; it also results in higher administrative costs for the state, insurers, and providers.
- **Stabilized preventive and pediatric health care systems.** Gaps in children's coverage strain the finances of the primary care and pediatric infrastructure of our state. These

providers already work long hours for lower reimbursement rates. Ensuring that their patients have continuous coverage will mean this vital component of our healthcare system will flourish.

The loss of coverage -- even for a short period of time - disrupts care, increases family expenses, and costs government, providers, and insurance companies money. Most very young children lose their coverage because of clerical errors in processing or because a parent couldn't be notified. Very few lose coverage because they are no longer eligible.

Adopting continuous eligibility until age six would continue policies implemented during the pandemic, when states were required to keep children on Medicaid and CHP, rather than require renewal. New York presently provides 12-month continuous Medicaid eligibility for children, which has helped maintain New York's high coverage rates for children.

Enacting continuous coverage for children until they reach age six would keep New York on the forefront of protecting and investing in our youngest children and their families across the state.

Thank you for your consideration. We remain available to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics, New York Chapters 1, 2 & 3
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York
Community Service Society of New York
Empire Justice Center
Health Care For All New York
Medicaid Matters New York
New York Legal Assistance Group
Robin Hood
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
The Children's Agenda