



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Feb. 6, 2013**

### **Governor Corbett Reinforces Commitment to CHIP Program with Proposed Budget Increase of \$8.5 Million to Insure More Children**

**Wilkes-Barre** – Governor Tom Corbett continued his budget announcements today by visiting the Osterhout Free Public Library to discuss his plan to increase outreach and enrollment for the state Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

“CHIP has been providing health insurance coverage for two decades now and it is helping Pennsylvania kids grow up healthier,” Corbett said. “We are re-energizing our CHIP outreach and enrollment activities with a commitment of \$8.5 million to ensure our children don’t go without the medical care they need.”

About \$1 million of the proposal will be used to focus on partnerships and enrollment outreach toward the long-term goal of insuring all eligible children in Pennsylvania.

The additional funding will be used for enrollment services and to provide health care coverage to the additional 9,300 new enrollees expected through the expanded outreach.

CHIP was created under legislation signed in 1992. It began providing benefits in 1993, and later served as a model for the federal S-CHIP program in 1997. CHIP expanded in 2006 with Cover All Kids, an initiative making sure that any uninsured child and teen not eligible for, or enrolled in, Medical Assistance would have access to affordable, comprehensive health care coverage.

Also attending today’s event was Franca D’Agostino, Executive Director for CHIP and Strategic Initiatives, and Dr. Jeffery Kile, a practicing pediatrician from Kingston and Associate Medical Director for Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

“As a pediatric doctor and medical advisor, each day I see how critically important it is for children to have regular access to health care,” Kile said. “If your child is uninsured, CHIP should be your partner in good health.”

CHIP is one of Pennsylvania’s most successful public-private partnerships. The state offers the program and defines its benefit plans, while private insurance carriers coordinate those benefits and the care they provide.

CHIP has a comprehensive benefit package and includes doctor visits, prescription, immunizations, emergency care and certain dental, vision and hearing services. Premiums are affordable because they're based on household income. There is no cost for families who qualify for free CHIP. As an example, a four-person household making \$60,000 will have an average monthly premium of \$67 per child, plus co-pays.

"CHIP is an important part of many families and gives parents peace of mind, knowing that doctor visits and immunizations are covered," D'Agostino said. "The additional funds that Governor Corbett is committing to the program will help us reach more families and get more children enrolled."

CHIP is brought to families by the following private insurance companies: Aetna, Capital BlueCross, First Priority Health, Geisinger Health Plan, Highmark, Independence Blue Cross, Kidz Partners, United HealthCare of Pennsylvania, Inc. and UPMC for Kids.

For more information about the Governor's budget proposal, go to [www.pa.gov](http://www.pa.gov).

For more information about CHIP, visit [www.chipcoverspakids.com](http://www.chipcoverspakids.com).

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