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The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

I write to urge you to include the bipartisan Keep Kids' Insurance Dependable and Secure (KIDS) Act of 2017 in any end-of-year funding package. This bill will extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to the 9 million children who are relying on it nationwide. As you are well aware, the program expired in October, leaving families in Colorado and across the nation without certainty on low-cost health coverage.

CHIP is critical to too many families in Colorado for us to wait until mid to late January, or possibly later, to extend the program. CHIP was essential in reducing the number of uninsured children to an all-time low of 2.5 percent in my state. Throughout the year, about 90,000 children in Colorado benefit from regular check-ups and affordable health care services that CHIP makes possible. The program also covers about 800 expecting mothers in Colorado who can access prenatal visits for a healthy pregnancy.

Last month, families in Colorado received notices that their health coverage through CHIP may be in jeopardy without congressional action by December 2017. To the thousands of families that benefit from CHIP, that warning means a pricier health plan or foregoing coverage altogether. In a letter I received from Governor John Hickenlooper and Lieutenant Governor Donna Lynne, they said that they "expect that kids and pregnant women in Colorado will lose their CHIP coverage at the end of January."

We must do all we can to give peace of mind to families in Colorado who rely on CHIP so their kids can access health care. Children's health care is too critical an issue for us to delay any further.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator