



updates on issues that matter to you
from **Illinois Action for Children**

Congress Reaches Agreement on Economic Stimulus

One of the most important pieces of legislation in President Barack Obama's first 100 days in office is the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Also known as the "economic stimulus plan", the package is a combination of tax cuts and government spending proposals meant to save or create 3 to 4 million jobs, give the economy a short-term boost and provide for long-term growth.

Besides \$275 billion in economic recovery tax cuts, several other provisions of the stimulus plan directly impact children and low-income families. They include a \$2 billion increase to state child care subsidies, \$2.1 billion in increases for Head Start and Early Head Start, \$20 billion increase to the food stamp benefit, and \$1.5 billion for community health centers services and modernization.

On January 28, the stimulus plan passed out of the House of Representatives before landing in the Senate. The Senators passed the bill on Tuesday and now both Houses are working together to create a bill they can agree on. President Obama hopes he can sign the bill into law by February 16th, Presidents' Day.

State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorized

In an important step towards providing health care to all children across the country, SCHIP passed the Senate on Friday January 30th. The State Children's Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP for short, provides federal matching funds to states to provide health insurance to families with children. The program was created in 1997 to bridge the gap for families that earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to purchase health insurance on the open market.

On February 4th, 2009 President Barack Obama signed the bill in to law. The SCHIP program serves up to 11 million otherwise uninsured children. President Obama sees this legislation the first step to insuring all children in the U.S. He states, "The way I see it, providing coverage to 11 million children through CHIP is a down payment on my commitment to cover every single American. And it is just one component of a much broader effort to finally bring our health care system into the twenty-first century."

Upcoming Events

With the Illinois General Assembly beginning session late last month, Springfield is buzzing with activity. Now is a great time to learn more about early care and education issues in Illinois as well as our 2009 Legislative Agenda. Illinois Action For Children is holding several events in the upcoming weeks and months to help educate our members on early care and education issues in Illinois.

Issues Forum

Thursday, February 12 ***TONIGHT***

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

John A Logan College

700 Logan College Rd.

Building C, Tarvin Crisp Room

Carterville, IL 62918

All people across Illinois should have equal access to quality child care,

health care, housing and economic opportunities. Please join us to discuss the issues, promote awareness and create effective solutions.

Issues Forum

Friday, February 13

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Joliet Main Public Library

150 N. Ottawa St.

Joliet, IL 60432

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Statewide Public Policy Conference

Thursday, February 19

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel

701 E Adams

Springfield, IL 62701

\$15.00 registration fee, includes lunch

Click [here](#) for more information

Issues Forum

Monday, March 2nd

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Carole Robertson Center for Learning

2929 West 19th St.

Chicago, IL 60623

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Spring Into Action Public Policy Conference

March 24-25, 2009

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel & Conference Center

701 E. Adams Street

Springfield, IL 62701

Click [here](#) for more information



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