



Senator Eliot Shapleigh

District 29

Texas Press Release

Contact:

Claudia Ordaz

(915) 544-1990

claudia.ordaz@senate.state.tx.us



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SENATOR SHAPLEIGH TO HOST PRESS CONFERENCE ASKING GOVERNOR PERRY TO PUT CHIP IN SPECIAL SESSION CALL

"Texas is ground zero in America's health care crisis. One in six uninsured children in America live in Texas. Both the Senate and House passed CHIP by wide margins; the money is in the budget. Now, it's time for Governor Rick Perry to take responsibility and put CHIP in the call for Special Session."

AUSTIN - On Monday, June 29, 2009 at 10 a.m. in the Lt. Governor's Press room, Senator Eliot Shapleigh (D-El Paso), will host a press conference asking Governor Perry to put the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in Special Session call, which begins July 1.

Thursday, Senator Shapleigh filed [S.B. 6](#), which would expand CHIP eligibility to children whose families earn up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). Children are currently only eligible for enrollment if their family earns up to 200 FPL.

Families of four with an annual income of about \$22,000 are at the FPL, according to 2009 guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The bill could expand coverage to more than 80,000 additional children in Texas. Texas ranks [first in the nation in the number and percentage of uninsured children](#). Of the approximately 9 million uninsured children in the U.S., 1.5 million are from Texas. The federal government matches \$3 for every \$1 that Texas dedicates to CHIP.

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- More -

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The cost of expanding CHIP is already included in contingency appropriations under Section 17.64 of Article IX in [S.B.1](#), the state's budget for the next two years.

During the 81st legislature, [S.B. 841](#) by Senator Averitt, which would have also expanded CHIP eligibility, passed out of the Senate on a 29-2 vote and was reported favorably by the House Committee on Human Services on a 7-0 vote. Similar legislation, [H.B. 2962](#), by Representative Coleman passed out of the House on a 87-55 vote and was referred to the Senate Committee on Finance.

Senator Shapleigh sent a [letter](#) to Governor Perry calling to include CHIP expansion in Special Session.

- End -

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