

September 11, 2017

Members of the United States Congress:

We are Champions for America's Future, a national, nonpartisan organization of elite athletes and coaches who have come together to ensure every child has the best opportunity to succeed in life. We have achieved success—in sports and in life—because people invested the time and resources to help us overcome obstacles. From asthma to Type I diabetes to disabilities to mental health and more, we were fortunate to receive medical attention and care when it was needed.

The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides low-cost health care to children in families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford private insurance. With the federal government covering 90 percent of the cost of CHIP, the delivery of services to a population in-need is critical to keeping youth healthy and thriving. We are asking Congress to reauthorize CHIP before it expires on September 30, 2017.

Since CHIP was enacted, the amount of uninsured children has gone from 14% to an all time low of 5% in 2016. Children who receive health care coverage through CHIP experience marked improvements in physical and mental health outcomes, in addition to academic performance.

For example, CHIP cuts the proportion of children with unmet health needs in half or more. One year after enrolling in CHIP, children with asthma had half as many asthma attacks and one-quarter as many children had been hospitalized for asthma. Offering important coverage to children with special health needs and disabilities makes CHIP a lifeline for middle-income families, who otherwise would be unable to afford expensive care for these conditions.

Currently, 13%-20% of children in the U.S. live with a mental health condition, and most do not receive the help they need. Mental health services are covered under CHIP, and children can be connected with the treatment they need to reach positive milestones in school and life. Additionally, CHIP addresses the main causes of chronic absenteeism by giving children access to treatment for both physical and mental health care. One in seven students misses more than 10 percent of the school year- treatment through CHIP is imperative to keeping students healthy and in the classroom.

As athletes and coaches, we know how important it is to take care of one's body and mind, and how instrumental good health is to one's overall success. CHIP is a fundamental building block for the present and future success of America's children. **We urge you to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) before it expires September 30, 2017.**

Sincerely,

Shannon Boxx
Olympic Gold Medalist
Soccer

Mary Carillo
Celebrated Sportscaster &
Former Tennis Player

Sasha Cohen
Olympic Silver Medalist
Figure Skating

Lindsay Davenport

Former No. 1 Champion in Singles & Doubles
Tennis

Chris Evert

Winner of 18 Grand Slam Singles
Tennis

Jennie Finch

Olympic Gold Medalist
Softball

Vonetta Flowers

Olympic Gold Medalist
Bobsled

Dick Fosbury

Olympic Gold Medalist
Track & Field

Julie Foudy

Olympic Gold Medalist
Soccer

Kym Hampton

Former Professional Basketball Player
New York Liberty, WNBA

Nancy Hogshead-Makar

Olympic Gold Medalist
Swimming

Carla Overbeck

Olympic Gold Medalist
Soccer

Summer Sanders

Olympic Gold Medalist
Swimming

Pam Shriver

Winner of 133 Titles
Tennis

Nikki Stone

Olympic Gold Medalist
Skiing

Jen Welter

First Female Coach in the NFL
Football