



December 20, 2006

The Honorable Harry Reid  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kent Conrad  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Max Baucus  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable John D. Dingell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Speaker-elect Pelosi, Senator Conrad, Representative Spratt, Senator Baucus and Representative Dingell:

As you prepare to lead the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, we urge you to include adequate funding in the federal budget to sustain and expand the highly successful **State Children's Health Insurance Program**, so that our nation approaches the day when every child in the United States has access to affordable health coverage.

As congregations from more than fifty religious traditions, representing over one million families, PICO sees children's health as a core moral issue. We take as our example the prophet Jeremiah who lamented for his people of Judah. Grieving over their condition, he cried out: *Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?* We ask these same questions of our elected leaders. Is there no balm in Washington, D.C.? Is there no solution there? Why has the health of our children not been restored?

In November, Americans voted for change. Many Democrats ran on a health care agenda. Providing access to affordable health insurance for every child is the right place to start. There are nine million uninsured children in this country; more than 6 million are already eligible for public coverage. If we do what is right as a nation, we can take care of *all* our children and raise the healthiest generation in American history.

Reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) next year provides a golden opportunity to take concrete steps toward covering all children. But progress is only possible if the budget includes adequate funding to sustain and expand the SCHIP program. We urge you to support funding for the following steps:

- Provide adequate federal funding to cover the 2007 shortfalls in SCHIP funding which put over 600,000 children at risk of losing their health coverage.

- Fill the estimated \$12-14 billion shortfall in funding over five years so that no one loses coverage in SCHIP.
- Include substantial additional funding to support states that are moving toward covering all uninsured children, including those expanding coverage to 300 percent of poverty.
- Create financial incentives and support for states to reach out to and retain coverage for the majority of uninsured children – those who are already eligible for SCHIP and Medicaid.
- Give states more ability to simplify the enrollment and renewal process, including using express lane eligibility programs.
- Give states the option and funding to cover legal immigrant children and pregnant women.

In the effort to expand health coverage for children we urge that Congress do no harm to the broader Medicaid program, which provides essential health care services to the poorest children in the nation. The fate of our children and families is interconnected; we must not pit children from low-income families against those with even lower incomes.

Many local communities and state governments have already taken action toward covering all uninsured children and expanding coverage for low-income families. These initiatives reflect strong grassroots public support for efforts to improve children's health. But without leadership and additional federal financing, our counties and states run the risk of losing rather than gaining ground on covering all children.

Over the coming months our faith communities will be organizing to make our voices heard in our state capitals and in Washington, D.C. We will continue to educate and agitate so that Congress adopts a budget that is faithful to the needs of working families. We urge you to take a first step in restoring American domestic priorities by budgeting sufficient funds to strengthen the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

*With more than one thousand religious congregations representing 50 denominations and one million families in 150 cities and 18 states, PICO National Network is one of the largest community-improvement efforts in the United States.*

We look forward to an opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss funding for children's health in next year's federal budget.

Sincerely,

Fr. John Baumann, Executive Director, PICO National Network  
 Rev. Scott Fuller, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Anchorage, AK  
 Rev. C George Sonray, Alaska Native Lutheran Church, Anchorage, AK  
 Rev. Paul D. Everett, First CME Church, Anchorage, AK  
 Rev. Richard Cavens, Saint Mark Lutheran Church, Anchorage, AK  
 Rev. Paul Scheitlin, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Banning, CA

Rev. Patricia de Jong, FCCB, Berkeley, CA  
 Rev. Kim Smith, Trinity Montclair United Methodist Church, Berkeley, CA  
 Rev. Sarah Isakson, Lutheran Church of the Cross, Berkeley, CA  
 Rabbi Stuart Kelman, Netivot Shalom, Berkeley, CA  
 Rev. Kurt Kuhwald, Unitarian Universalist Clergy, San Francisco, CA  
 Rev. Michael Henderson, Shiloh Church of God In Christ, Oceanside, CA  
 Msgr Lawrence Purcell, Nativity Catholic Church, Rancho Santa Fe, CA  
 Fr. Jerry Brown, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Concord, CA  
 Rev. Edward Kaicher, St. Peters Catholic Community, Fallbrook, CA  
 Rev. Robert Crabb, Central Valley Lutheran Ministry, Clovis, CA  
 Rev. E Paul Werfelmann, Hope Lutheran Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Marcia Brennan, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Perry Kavookjian, St. Paul Newman Center Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. William Knezovich, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Loren Blessing, St Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Sophia DeWitt, Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Larry Patten, Wesley United Methodist Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Steve Ratzlaff, Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Bet Hannon, Wesley United Methodist Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Don Romsa, Lutheran Campus Ministry of Fresno, Fresno, CA  
 Msgr. John Coehlo-Harguindeguy, St Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Fresno, CA  
 Rev. Misipouena Tagalao, Second Samoan UCC, Long Beach, CA  
 Rev. George Matanic, O.P., St Andrew Newman Center, Riverside, CA  
 Sr. Marita Beumer, CPPS, Queen of Angels Catholic Church, Riverside, CA  
 Mr. Charles Freidel, Inland Valley Friends Meeting (Quakers), San Bernardino, CA  
 Rev. Elwood Hall, Lutheran Church of Our Savior, San Bernardino, CA  
 Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg, First Congregational UCC, San Bernardino, CA  
 Rev. Bruce Cecil, Our Lady of Soledad, Coachella, CA  
 Rev. Dr. William Godwin, University Baptist Church, Desert Hot Springs, CA  
 Rev. Michael J. Mandala, S. J., Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Hollywood, CA  
 Rev. Jaime Edwards-Acton, Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, Los Angeles, CA  
 Rev. Sharon Stalkfleet, Lutheran Ministry to Nursing Homes, Alameda, CA  
 Rev. Lucy Kolin, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Oakland, CA  
 Rev. Larry Ashley, Cosmopolitan Baptist Church, Oakland, CA  
 Fr. John Direen, Catholic Parish of Christ the Light, Oakland, CA  
 Rev. Dr Valerie Miles-Tribble, Imani Community Church, Oakland, CA  
 Rev. Mary Stein-Webber, Trinity Lutheran Church, Oakland, CA  
 Rev. Ross Merkel, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Oakland, CA  
 Fr. Jesus Nieto-Ruiz, St. Anthony, Catholic Church, Oakland, CA  
 Rev. John Fernandes, Roman Catholic Church, Oakland, CA  
 Rabbi David J. Cooper, Kehilla Community Synagogue, Piedmont, CA  
 Rev. Jesus Palomino, The Society of Jesus, San Jose, CA  
 Rev. Bob Rohdenburg, Garden Grove United Methodist Church, Anaheim, CA  
 Rev. Cheryl Raine, First Presbyterian Church of Garden Grove, Garden Grove, CA  
 Fr. Emmett Farrell, St. Jude Catholic Church, San Diego, CA  
 Rev. Amelia Adams, Open Door House of Prayer, Stockton, CA  
 Elder John Harris, Greater White Rose COGIC, Stockton, CA  
 Min. Pheng Lo, Lao Evangelical, Stockton, CA  
 Min. Angela Phillips, Open Door House of Prayer, Stockton, CA

Rev. John Fitzpatrick, St Athanasius Catholic Church, Mountain View, CA  
 Fr. Bob Moran, St. Joseph Church, Mountain View, CA  
 Sr. Dianne Nixon, St. Peter, Pacifica, Pacifica, CA  
 Sr. Dianne Nixon, P, St. Peter Catholic Church, Pacifica, CA  
 Rev. Jonathan Staples, Jerusalem Baptist, Palo Alto, CA  
 Rev. Jonas Hayes, First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, Palo Alto, CA  
 Pastor Jonathan Staples, Jerusalem Baptist Church, Palo Alto, CA  
 Pastor Candace Cessna, Woodside Road United Methodist, Redwood City, CA  
 Pastor Dale Weatherspoon, First United Methodist Church, Redwood City, CA  
 Rev. Wesley Woo, Peninsula Interfaith Action, San Carlos, CA  
 Rev. Matthew Carnes, Society of Jesus, Santa Clara, CA  
 Rev. Nan Swanson, First Presbyterian, Palo Alto, Palo Alto, CA  
 Rev. Francisco Velazquez, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Sacramento, CA  
 Fr. Rodolfo Llamas, St Peter's/All Hallows parish, Sacramento, CA  
 Rev. Charles Warner, Christ Temple Apostolic Church, Sacramento, CA  
 Rev. Faith Whitmore, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Sacramento, CA  
 Rev. Carol Carter, North Sacramento United Methodist Church, Sacramento, CA  
 Rev. Michael-Ray Mathews, Grace Baptist Church, San Jose, CA  
 Rabbi Joel Fleekop, Los Gatos, CA  
 Rabbi Lisa Levenberg, Congregation Shir Hadash, Los Gatos, CA  
 Rabbi Melanie Aron, Congregation Shir Hadash, Los Gatos, CA  
 Msgr. John Sandersfeld, St. Francis of Assisi, San Jose, CA  
 Bishop Roy Dixon, Southern Ca. 4th Ecc. Jurisdiction COGIC, San Diego, CA  
 Rev. Wilbert Miller, First Lutheran Church, San Diego, CA  
 Fr. Tommie Jennings, Christ the King Catholic Church, San Diego, CA  
 Fr. Emmet Farrell, St. Jude, San Diego, San Diego, CA  
 Rev. Henry Rodriguez, St. Jude Shrine, San Diego, CA  
 Rev. Bruce Orsborn, Blessed Sacrament Church, San Diego, CA  
 Mr. Harry Guess, Christ the King Catholic Church, San Diego, CA  
 Rev. William Radatz, First Lutheran Church, San Diego, CA  
 Fr. Robert Fambrini, SJ, San Diego, CA  
 Rev. Beverly Davis, New Creation Church of San Diego, San Diego, CA  
 Rev. Cynthia Robinson, SFOP/Bethel SF, San Francisco, CA  
 Rabbi Camille Shira Angel, Sha'ar Zahav, San Francisco, CA  
 Mr. Charles Kullmann, CSP, Old Saint Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco, CA  
 Rev. Jorge Román, Saint Peter's Church, San Francisco, CA  
 Rabbi Yoel Kahn, San Francisco, CA  
 Fr. Bill Justice, Mission Dolores Church, San Francisco, CA  
 Msgr. Mickey McCormick, Mission Dolores Church, San Francisco, CA  
 Fr. Paul Gawlowski, St. Paul of the Shipwreck, San Francisco, CA  
 Fr. Jorge Roman, St. Peter Catholic Church, San Francisco, CA  
 Rev. Nathanael Bacon, InnerChange, San Francisco., CA  
 Rev. Thomas Scirghi, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA  
 Rev. Jeff Johnson, University Lutheran Chapel, Berkeley, CA  
 Rabbi Moshe ben Asher, Gather the People, Chatsworth, CA  
 Ms Mary Anne Isaak, College Community Church Mennonite Brethren, Clovis, CA  
 Fr. John Prochaska, Catholic, Fremont, CA  
 Rev. Jerry Stinson, First Congregational Church of Long Beach, Long Beach, CA  
 Fr. Diarmuid Casey, St. Athanasius Church, Mountain View, CA

Rev. Julia Older, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City, Redwood City, CA  
 Rev. John Blaker, St David of Wales, Richmond, CA  
 Rev. John Chamberlin, Alum Rock United Methodist, San Jose, CA  
 Rev. Dr Steven Churchill, Epiphany Lutheran Church, San Leandro, CA  
 Rev. Paul Kado, St. Mary's Parish, Visalia, CA  
 Rev. Bert Chilson, St. Therese Catholic Church, Aurora, CO  
 Rev. Paul Kottke, University Park UMC, Denver, CO  
 Rev. Steven Bauer, Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Denver, CO  
 Rev. John F. Backe, Our Savior's Lutheran Church (ELCA), Denver, CO  
 Fr. John Toepfer OFM Cap., Annunciation Catholic Church, Denver, CO  
 Rev. Thomas Smolich, S.J., Jesuit Conference, Washington, DC  
 Rev. Jim Wallis, Sojourners/Call to Renewal, Washington, DC  
 Rev. Timothy Godfrey, S.J., Georgetown University, Washington, DC  
 Rev. Otto Hentz, S.J., Georgetown University, Washington, DC  
 Rev. Larry Reimer, United Church of Christ, Gainesville, FL  
 Rev. David Ferguson, First AME Church, Altamonte Springs, FL  
 Rev. Dr Julius R. Tipton, John Calvin Presbyterian Church U.S.A., Orlando, FL  
 Rev. Robert Kreps, St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, Winter Park, FL  
 Rev. Janet F. Hoover, Emerson Avenue Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN  
 Rev. Jennifer Bryan, Lenexa United Methodist Church, Lenexa, KS  
 Pastor Oliver Duvernay, Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church, New Orleans, LA  
 Rev. Gilbert Washington, Beautiful Zion Baptist Church, Houma, LA  
 Rev. Kirkland Aitkens, St. Luke Baptist Church, Houma, LA  
 Rev. Alfred Carter, Living Water Baptist Church, Thibodaux, LA  
 Rev. Shirley Gravois, Promise of Life Ministries, Thibodaux, LA  
 Rev. Lionel Griffin, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Thibodaux, LA  
 Rev. Wilmer Todd, St. Luke Catholic Church, Thibodaux, LA  
 Iman Rafeeq Nu'Man, Masjid Ur Raheem, New Orleans, LA  
 Rev. Dr. Cory Sparks, Carrollton UMC, New Orleans, LA  
 Rev. Steven Beckham, First Little Rock Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, LA  
 Rev. Dr Stephen Mott, New England Annual Conference, Beverly, MA  
 Rev. Dr Art McDonald, Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex, Essex, MA  
 Rev. Matthew Stewart, St. Stephen's Memorial Episcopal Church, Lynn, MA  
 Rev. Karen Safstrom, First Lutheran Church, Lynn, MA  
 Rev. Robert Parady, Lake Shore Park United Methodist Church, Lynn, MA  
 Rabbi Judy Epstein, Keshet Yam, Manchester, MA  
 Rev. Joel Anderle, Community Covenant Church (Evangelical Covenant), Peabody, MA  
 Rev. Victoria Guest, First Congregational Church, Natick, MA  
 Rabbi David Thomas, Congregation Beth El, Sudbury, MA  
 Rev. Dr. Donald Mier, First Baptist Church, Fall River, MA  
 Rev. John Oliveira, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, New Bedford, MA  
 Rev. Marc Fallon, C.S.C., Catholic Social Services/Maya K'iche' USA, New Bedford, MA  
 Rev. George Elia, Cape Cod Covenant Church, Yarmouth Port, MA  
 Rabbi Raphael Kanter, Tifereth Israel Congregation, New Bedford, MA  
 Rev. Helen Williams, Vernon Chapel A.M.E. Church, Flint, MI  
 Rev. David Carl Olson, Unitarian Universalist Church of Flint, Flint, MI  
 Rev. Stanley Sims, Quinn Chapel A.M.E. Flint, Flint, MI  
 Fr. Paul Schwermer, Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Flint, MI  
 Rev. Kathryn Van Brocklin, PC (USA), Southfield, MI

Rev. Dr. Robert Martin, Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO  
Fr. Donald Helfrey, Diocese Kansas City - St. Joseph, Kansas City, MO  
Rev. Rayfield Burns, Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church, Kansas City, MO  
Rev. Roy Bates, New Resurrection Baptist, Kansas City, MO  
Fr. Norman Rotert, Visitation Church, Kansas City, MO  
Rev. Carol Book, Christus Lutheran Church, Camden, NJ  
Rev. Donna Lee Conkwright, Blackwood United Methodist Church, Blackwood, NJ  
Rev. Heyward Wiggins III, Camden Bible Tabernacle, Camden, NJ  
Fr. William Weiksner, St. Anthony of Padua, Camden, NJ  
Rev. Bruce Davidson, Lutheran Office of Governmental Ministry in NJ, Trenton, NJ  
Rev. Tom Newton, St. Peter Celestine Church, Cherry Hill, NJ  
Rev. Girard Walmsley, Hope Memorial Baptist Church, Clementon, NJ  
Rev. Dr. William Wilson, First United Methodist, Collingswood, NJ  
Rev. Robert Gregorio, Resurrection, Marmroa, NJ  
Rev. David Wehrle, First United Methodist Church, Mount Ephraim, NJ  
Rev. Dr. Fred Price, Emmanuel United Methodist Church, Oaklyn, NJ  
Rev. Eric Hoheisel, Oaklyn Baptist Church, Oaklyn, NJ  
Rev. Glenn Marshall, Park Avenue Community Church, Somerdale, NJ  
Rabbi Barry Schwartz, Congregation M'kor Shalom, Cherry Hill, NJ  
Rev. Dr. Frank Reeder, First Baptist Church of Pitman, Pitman, NJ  
Rev. David Rommereim, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Brooklyn, NY  
Rev. Janet Lee, Cortland, NY  
Rev. Luis A. Perez, The Bridge Network of Churches, Rochester, NY  
Pastor Nate Wright, God's Lighthouse of Praise, Rochester, NY  
Fr. Paul Tomasso, City West Catholic Community, Rochester, NY  
Fr. Vincent Panetinto, Community of the Blessed Trinity, Rochester, NY  
Rev. Tim Chesser, First Baptist Church of Delaware, Delaware, OH  
Rev. Robert Stevens, Zions United Church of Christ, Allentown, PA  
Rev. Dr. David Charles Smith, Jordan United Church of Christ, Allentown, PA  
Rev. Peter Bredlau, Muhlenberg College, ELCA, Allentown, PA  
Rev. David Brown, Dubbs United Church of Christ, Allentown, PA  
Father John Grabish, Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church, Allentown PA  
Rev. George Yoder, United Church of Christ, Allentown, PA  
Rev. Elizabeth W. Colton, Grace Church and the Incarnation Episcopal, Philadelphia, PA  
Sr. Margaret Brault, Sisters of Mercy, Burlington, VT  
Rev. Dr. Kendall Baker, Admiral Congregational UCC, Seattle, WA