



# PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE STATE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

*A National Survey Conducted on Behalf of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, August 2007*

**After hearing a description of the SCHIP program, voters overwhelmingly support Congress re-authorizing SCHIP for another five years. (86% favor/11% oppose)**

- The intensity of support is large with roughly two-thirds of voters (65%) saying they “strongly favor” Congress re-authorizing SCHIP for another five years.
- Voters across party support re-authorization. (Republicans – 77% favor, Independents – 86% favor, Democrats – 93% favor)

**Even after hearing how much it would cost (\$39 billion\*) to cover the six million children currently enrolled in SCHIP for another five years, voters’ support for re-authorization remains extremely strong and opposition remains very low. (77% favor/18% oppose)**

- More than half of voters (53%) say they “strongly favor” Congress re-authorizing SCHIP for another five years at a cost of \$39 billion.
- Support for re-authorization continues across party when the cost is revealed. (Republicans – 64% favor, Independents – 78% favor, Democrats – 86% favor)

**There is also significant public support for expansion of SCHIP to cover an additional four million uninsured children for five years at an additional cost of \$35 billion. (63% favor/31% oppose)**

- Expansion of SCHIP is even supported by a majority of conservatives. (Conservatives – 53% favor, Moderates – 67% favor, Liberals – 73% favor)

**Nearly two-thirds (64%) of voters say they disagree with President Bush’s decision to veto legislation passed by Congress to expand SCHIP.**

- Even half (50%) of conservatives say they disagree with President Bush’s decision. (Conservatives – 50% disagree, Moderates – 68% disagree, Liberals – 86% disagree)

\* The Congressional Budget Office estimated that SCHIP would need \$39 billion over the next five years to sustain current enrollment (\$25 billion in baseline funding plus funds to cover a \$14.1 billion budget shortfall.)

## Voters find the supporter’s position on the need for expansion of SCHIP more convincing than the opponent’s position.

### Positions Tested:

### % Convincing

Supporters say expansion of SCHIP will strengthen a program that works. Since it was created ten years ago, SCHIP has decreased the number of uninsured children by nearly 25%. It covers six million kids whose parents work but cannot afford insurance on their own. SCHIP provides coverage through private health insurance plans so that children can see doctors when they are sick, get checkups, prescription medicines and hospitalizations. By expanding SCHIP, we can continue to cover kids currently enrolled and another four million who are uninsured now.

77%

Opponents of SCHIP expansion say that it will dramatically increase the federal government’s role in health care and take us one step closer to socialized medicine. Expansion will shift middle-class children out of private health coverage and into government funded plans. And in public programs, children get less care and lower quality care. Providing tax credits so families can purchase private insurance is a better way to provide quality health care coverage to America’s children and families.

46%

*Methodology:* Public Opinion Strategies conducted a national survey of 900 registered likely voters August 4-7, 2007 on behalf of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The sample was drawn proportional to the voting age population in each state. The margin of error is +3.27%.