



Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

For the last several years, a priority for Causa has been passing legislation that allows all children to have access to health coverage. Causa is an organization that advocates on behalf of Latino immigrants and their families in Oregon, and access to health care for all children was among the top issues our community identified as a major need. We continue to stand with the Oregon Latino Health Coalition to support this important issue during the 2017 legislative session.

Right now, 17,600 children do not have any medical coverage so that they can receive regular check-ups, vaccinations, and preventative health care without causing financial distress to their families. Nearly all of these 17,600 children live in low-income households that cannot afford to pay costly out of pocket expenses for doctors' visits for their children. This means that in many cases, these children go without seeing a doctor until an emergency arises, which is more costly and dangerous for the child.

Health insurance coverage is one of the single most effective ways to ensure that children receive the preventive health care service and the medical care they need to thrive in school and life. While we are thankful for the safety net clinics that serve all low-income communities, we also recognize that they cannot provide the comprehensive, consistent, and preventative health services needed for these children. Only health care coverage will truly ensure that these children have the health care needed to be successful in school and become healthy, productive members of our community. In fact, insured children are 9.7% less likely to drop out of high school and are 5.5% more likely to graduate from college.

Causa strongly urges the Oregon legislature to extend health care coverage for all children in 2017, and we look forward to working with you to make that happen.

Andrea Miller

Executive Director, Causa Oregon  
700 Marion ST NE  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-999-5940  
andrea@causaoregon.org