

Rothman Votes in Favor of Healthcare Coverage for Millions of U.S. Children in Need, Provides Help to Struggling Middle-Class Families

New legislation will provide health insurance coverage for 380,000 New Jersey children, 130,000 more than 2008.

(Washington, DC)-- Today, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn) voted in favor of H.R. 2, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 289 to 139. "This is truly a historic day," said Rothman. "Twice before the House has voted in support of expanding healthcare coverage for more uninsured children, and twice before we've been thwarted by President Bush. Now, with the support of President-Elect Obama, we can finally provide relief for more suffering families."

H.R. 2 will expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program ("S-CHIP") to cover an additional 4 million American children for four years, raising the current number from 7 million to 11 million. In addition to extending coverage for dental care as well as psychiatric treatment, the bill contains a provision that allows higher cost-of-living states like New Jersey to cover families making an income of up to 350% above the federal poverty level—up to \$74,200 in annual household income for New Jersey. Passage of H.R. 2 will ensure that federal funding for NJ FamilyCare continues through Fiscal Year 2013.

"Passage of this bill in the new Congress is a strong first step toward solving the crisis of the uninsured in America," said Rothman. "Right now there are 47 million Americans surviving without health insurance, including 1.3 million in my home state of New Jersey. These families are living in constant fear that a sudden illness or injury could result in financial ruin. That is why it is so important that we take swift and meaningful action. Providing healthcare coverage for an additional 4 million children is a powerful example of what we can accomplish on a whole host of problems facing our country. I look forward to working with the new President and my colleagues in Congress toward bringing additional changes for the better to New Jersey and the entire country."

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