

Subcommittee on Children & Families

Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions

Chairman Bob Casey

The Medicaid for Every Child Act

Introduced by Senator Bob Casey (D-PA)

Every child deserves access to quality health care. Our Nation has an obligation to provide care for the children who need it, and for almost 60 years, Medicaid has been our way of fulfilling that obligation. The program is a lifeline for the millions of American families who use it to access care for their children, particularly in rural areas. However, because of loopholes in coverage and the high cost of health care, as many as [four percent](#) of American children remain uninsured, a number that varies widely across states.

The *Medicaid for Every Child Act* would bring this failure of our health care system to an end. Children would be automatically enrolled in Medicaid at birth and would retain that eligibility until the age of 18, without the need to reenroll annually. Parents could proactively opt their child out of Medicaid if they have another form of coverage, such as being eligible for CHIP, securing coverage through the marketplace, or having coverage through their employer. The federal government would cover the cost of this Medicaid population with a 100 percent Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP).

The *Medicaid for Every Child Act* would ensure that no children would ever again be forced to grow up struggling to stay healthy due to a lack of health coverage. Every child across the country would finally be able to access the full spectrum of our Nation's world class medical system, from acute care for pressing illnesses and injuries to preventive care like regular physicals and screenings. Automatically enrolling children in Medicaid would provide a meaningful backstop for all American families but would be particularly critical for children with disabilities and chronic illnesses who rely on care to survive. The bill would guarantee coverage for over 2.6 million children in Pennsylvania, including over 645,000 children in rural counties where health care has historically been more difficult to access.

There is a proven need to expand Medicaid to every child. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, states were required to keep children and adults enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP continuously covered. The result was a substantial rise in children's enrollment in health insurance, which increased by 11 percent from February 2020 to June 2021, demonstrating the significant need for expanded children's health care coverage around the country. The unwinding of these pandemic-era requirements has put coverage for many children at risk as eligibility for Medicaid and CHIP is redetermined across the country. It is critical to find a long-term solution that ensures can access the quality health care they require to grow and thrive. This bill would ensure that no child has to worry about health care ever again.