

# the Reporter

Illinois Hospital Association



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## **GOV TO FOCUS ON UNINSURED**

Gov. Rod Blagojevich is making universal health coverage a top priority for his second term. In his inaugural speech last week, the Governor promised to expand the state's health insurance system to serve more people.

"We can expand access to health care so that not just kids get coverage, but every family member has access to affordable, quality health care," said Blagojevich. "We will work to improve the quality of care, we will expand our effort to cover the uninsured, we will protect consumers, and finally, we will provide real premium relief for families across Illinois, who work and pay taxes and who desperately need health care they can afford."

While not offering any specifics about his plan, the Governor said he will be presenting details of the "next phase of our health care reform agenda" in the coming months.

Meanwhile, the Adequate Health Care Task Force is scheduled to take a final vote on its plan for the uninsured on Jan. 18. That plan, to be submitted to the General Assembly, includes individual and employer mandates and a price tag of \$3.6 billion for the state.

## **KAISER RANKS ILLINOIS #1 FOR KIDS' COVERAGE**

For the third year in a row the Kaiser Foundation's Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured named Illinois first in the nation for expanding health care coverage to uninsured children and working parents. According to the report, the All Kids program has provided a model for several other states to attempt universal health coverage for children.

The report found that between June 2004 and June 2005, Illinois led the nation in enrolling parents in FamilyCare, with a 102% percent increase in adult enrollment. In addition, Illinois had the 3rd largest increase in the number of children enrolled in the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which is scheduled for reauthorization by Congress this year.

In 2006 -- for the first time in four years -- no state cut eligibility for Medicaid or SCHIP, and one-third of the states increased access to health coverage. However, new federal proof-of-citizenship rules are believed to be leading to a decline in children's Medicaid enrollment in several states.

The annual Kaiser report examines rules and policies that impact enrollment in Medicaid and SCHIP, and can be seen online.

## **COVERAGE FOR ALL FLOATED IN CAL.**

Every Californian would have access to health insurance under an ambitious plan proposed last week by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The plan spreads the \$12 billion price tag among government, employers, providers, and individuals.

Hospitals would have to pay 4% of their revenues, and doctors 2% of their revenues toward coverage for the uninsured. Public insurance would be expanded to adults earning up to 100% above poverty level and to children in families at 300% above that level. Employers with 10 workers or more would have to buy insurance for their workers or pay a fee of 4% of their payroll into an insurance pool. Individuals would be required to buy coverage. Insurers would not be able to deny coverage to anyone

