

Veto Override for H.R. 3963 – Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act

FLOOR SITUATION

The vote to override the President’s veto of the Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (H.R. 3963) is expected on the House floor on January 23, 2008.

The President vetoed H.R. 3963 on December 12, 2007, and on that same day the House voted to postpone consideration of the veto message.

**Note: On December 29, 2007, the President signed the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Extension Act (S. 2499) into law. This legislation provides a clean extension of the SCHIP program through March 31, 2009.*

VETO MESSAGE

In his veto message to the House of Representatives, President George W. Bush stated, “the leadership in the Congress has refused to meet with my Administration’s representatives. Although they claim to have made ‘substantial changes’ to the legislation, H.R. 3963 is essentially identical to the legislation that I vetoed in October. The legislation would still shift SCHIP away from its original purpose by covering adults. It would still result in government health care for approximately 2 million children who already have private health care coverage. The new bill, like the old bill, does not responsibly offset its new and unnecessary spending, and it still raises taxes on working Americans.” ([Veto Message for H.R. 3963](#))

BACKGROUND

The State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) was established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. This program gives block grants to States to assist them in coverage of uninsured, low-income children who do not qualify for Medicaid.

The House has considered two pieces of legislation prior to reauthorize and expand SCHIP prior to the consideration of H.R. 3963.

- The Children’s Health and Medicare Protection “CHAMP” Act of 2007 (H.R. 3162) was passed by the House on August 1, 2007, by a vote of 225-204. This legislation was not considered by the Senate. ([Legislative Digest for H.R. 3162](#))
- The Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007 (H.R. 976) was passed by the House on September 25, 2007, by a vote of 265-159 with one member voting present. The Senate subsequently passed H.R. 976 by a vote of 67-29. However it was vetoed by the President on October 3, 2007. ([Legislative Digest for H.R. 976](#))

H.R. 3963 was introduced by Representative John Dingell (D-MI) on October 24, 2007, in response to the President's veto of H.R. 976. The bill was not subject to the House Committee process and the text of the legislation was made available just prior to its consideration by the Rules Committee. ([Legislative Digest for H.R. 3963](#))

The House passed H.R. 3963 on October 25, 2007 ([Roll Call No. 1009](#))

	<u>YEAS</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	PRES	<u>NV</u>
DEMOCRATIC	222	1		10
REPUBLICAN	43	141		16
INDEPENDENT				
TOTALS	265	142		26

The bill was subsequently passed by the Senate on November 1, 2007, by a vote of 64 to 30. H.R. 3963 was presented to the President on November 30, 2007, and vetoed on December 12, 2007.

The House voted to postpone consideration of the veto message on December 12, 2007. ([Roll Call no. 1154](#))

	<u>YEAS</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	PRES	<u>NV</u>
DEMOCRATIC	211	1		20
REPUBLICAN		179		20
INDEPENDENT				
TOTALS	211	180		40

On December 18, 2007, the Senate passed the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Extension Act of 2007 (S. 2499) by unanimous consent. This legislation includes a straight extension of SCHIP through March 31, 2009. S. 2499 was passed by the House the following day by a vote of 411 to 3, and the President signed the bill into law on December 29, 2007 (P.L. 110-173). ([Legislative Digest for S. 2499](#))