October 4, 2017

The Honorable Roger Wicker
United States Senate
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wicker,

On behalf of the 5,200 Mississippi physicians in practice and in training, we are writing to urge you to reauthorize the Children’s Health Insurance Program. The Mississippi State Medical Association (MSMA), the Mississippi Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MSAAP), and the Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP) see CHIP as a vital public health program that has covered 48,000 Mississippi children who are now at risk of becoming uninsured.

Since CHIP started in 1997, the percentage of uninsured children in our country has dropped from 14 percent to 5 percent. In Mississippi, more than $175 million annually goes to the program. All of the money in Mississippi comes from the federal government.

We understand reauthorization bills are being considered by both chambers. This is terrific news, and restoring funding to this crucial program should not be a partisan political football. Children are blameless for the lives they are born into, and we all have a responsibility to see that they get the medical care they need. How we treat them says so much about who we are.

We all know there is much to be done on improving health care in our country. But while we work to make those changes, we need to keep the positive programs that work in place. CHIP works in Mississippi, giving our most vulnerable the help they need in an uncertain world. We urge you to be an active part of the solution to reauthorization and funding for this important program.

Sincerely,

William Grantham, MD
MSMA President 2017

Nikki Invancic, MD
MSAAP President

Katie Patterson, MD
MAFP President