**Talking About KidsCare**

KidsCare is Arizona’s Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). KidsCare provides high quality, affordable healthcare to children from working families. **A family of four can earn between $32,000 and $49,000 per year to qualify for KidsCare health coverage.** Today, around 35,000 Arizona children are covered through KidsCare.

**Arizona can’t afford to lose KidsCare again.** In a recent hearing, the new director of AHCCCS, Jami Snyder reported on the critical value of KidsCare. Since the freeze was lifted in 2016, KidsCare has provided 114 children with cancer treatments, almost 8,000 children with behavioral health services, over 5,000 children services for autism, and helped nearly 3,500 children with asthma.

Parents pay affordable monthly premiums and can choose their own doctor and dentist.

**The Arizona legislature and Governor must act this legislative session to prevent an automatic freeze to KidsCare on October 1, 2019.** Current law has a trigger to freeze KidsCare enrollment when the federal funding match drops below the current 100 percent match. Federal funding for KidsCare has been renewed by Congress for an additional ten years. The federal funding for Arizona is scheduled to drop to 90 percent on October 1, 2019. At that point, KidsCare will be automatically frozen unless the legislature and Governor remove the trigger and appropriate $8 million in state funding to match $98 million in federal funding.

The funding match for Arizona will move to 79% percent the following year on October 1, 2020 and remain there through 2027 and possibly beyond.

Arizona’s KidsCare health insurance has been called a work program by Governor Ducey because it’s designed for working families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid/AHCCCS but can’t afford private insurance.

Many hard-working Arizona families don’t have access to health insurance through their jobs, are contractors, or own a small business. KidsCare is an affordable option to give parents peace of mind financially and keep their children healthy and safe.

Research shows that investing in children’s health coverage saves money in the long run. Children who can go to the doctor and dentist and can keep conditions like asthma or juvenile diabetes under control end up doing better in school and needing less healthcare later in life and earning more taxable income.

When working families don’t face medical debt and bankruptcy because of an unexpected accident or illness, they are able to make a better life and achieve the American dream.

Governor Ducey and our state legislature should do their job and keep KidsCare around for Arizona’s working families!