

Missouri Budget Project: Update and Action Alert

1. **Food Stamps: What is Happening? What Can You Do to Help?**
2. **Health: Medicaid Regulations and CMS Directive on SCHIP**

1. *Farm Bill: What is Happening? What Can You Do to Help?*

Negotiations continue and just a few weeks ago House and Senate Agriculture Committee leaders issued a "framework" for the Food Stamp portion of the Farm Bill, which would allocate \$9.5 billion (over 10 years) to the nutrition title, including food stamps, TEFAP, fruits and vegetables, and international aid. However, it remains unclear how final this framework is since some key Members of the Senate Agriculture Committee appear to be opposed to this framework.

It is disappointing that this framework does not include the full \$11 billion included in the House version of the Food Stamp bill. Negotiations have proved to be difficult not only to secure the necessary offsets but also to make progress on how available funds will be allocated among the various areas of the Farm Bill. The \$9.5 billion level is a sign that the conferees, on a bipartisan basis, recognize that any final Farm Bill conference report will have to have a strong nutrition title.

There remains a significant risk that this level of funding for the nutrition provisions could come down even further. A number of key policymakers are pushing to add funds to various programs beyond what is included in the framework. This could jeopardize funds available for the nutrition title.

A vote on the Food Stamp Bill is likely to occur Friday April 18th. With the likelihood that another extension will be offered - it is vital for you to contact your Representative and urge them to support a strong and fully funded nutrition title.

WHAT YOU CAN DO?

Call your Missouri Congressional and Senate Members and urge them to contact the [Democratic and Republican leaders of the Agriculture Committee](#) and ask them to Fund the nutrition title in the final Farm Bill above the framework's \$9.5 billion if possible - but *under no circumstance should the funding for the title drop below this amount as the negotiations proceed.*

Please remind these Members that failure to pass a new Farm Bill this year would lock in food stamp benefit cuts that would affect *more than 10 million food stamp recipients.*

Senator Bond

202-224-5721

Senator McCaskill

202-224-6154

Representative William Lacy (Bill) Clay, Jr. (D - 01)

202-225-2406

Representative Todd Akin (R - 02)

202-225-2561

Representative Russ Carnahan (D - 03)

202-225-2671

Representative Ike Skelton (D - 04)

202-225-2876

Representative Emanuel Cleaver, II (D - 05)

202-225-4535

Representative Roy Blunt (R - 07)

202-225-6536

Representative Jo Ann Emerson (R - 08)

202-225-4404

Representative Samuel B. Graves (R - 06)

202-225-7041

Representative Kenny C. Hulshof (R - 09)

202-225-2956

2. ***Health: Medicaid Regulations and CMS Directive on SCHIP***

Over the last year, the President's Administration has proposed or issued regulations that will force states to make significant changes to Medicaid. If implemented, the changes will withdraw federal support for

important health care services and threaten access to health care for millions of Missouri's most vulnerable citizens. By shifting costs to the state and to local governments, the regulations would force Missouri to make difficult choices between critical education, public health, and social services. Last year a moratorium was placed on these regulations and they are scheduled to expire this spring.

The Missouri Department of Social Services has analyzed the impact of these regulations on Missouri services and have estimated a loss of more than \$252 million federal dollars to the state in FY 2009 alone. The fiscal impact will grow significantly over time.

The CMS directive implemented in August 2007 could, prevent Missouri from using federal dollars to cover children in families with incomes over 250 percent of the federal poverty level (about \$44,000 for a family of three). With this new policy, the administration is circumventing Congress and undermining state flexibility by establishing a new federal income limit for children's health coverage.

The "Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act of 2008", H.R. 5613 would place a temporary one-year moratorium on 7 Administration-imposed Medicaid regulations that would make significant cuts to the program over the next 5 years. You can find a summary of H.R. 5613 by clicking [here](#).

The House Appropriations Committee is expected to begin consideration of the Iraq Supplemental in two weeks. Since Members may try to include some or all of the moratoria on the supplemental, it will be important for House Appropriators to continue hearing why the moratoria are necessary. The Dingell/Murphy bill costs \$1.65 billion to delay the regulations for approximately one year, and the Committee is fully intending to provide offsets to comply with the pay-go rules in the House.

HOW YOU CAN HELP.

Call Representatives Jo Ann Emerson, Sam Graves, and Kenny Hulshof and ask them to support this very important piece of legislation.

[Representative Jo Ann Emerson \(R - 08\)](#)

202-225-4404

[Representative Samuel B. Graves \(R - 06\)](#)

202-225-7041

[Representative Kenny C. Hulshof \(R - 09\)](#)

202-225-2956