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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Pulling Emergency Rule for Insure Missouri Delays Critical Health Coverage for Missouri's Working Parents**

St. Louis, MO – Amy Blouin, Executive Director of the Missouri Budget Project, made the following statement today in response to an announcement by Missouri Governor Matt Blunt that his administration will postpone a request for a procedural emergency rule to implement the Insure Missouri program in the current fiscal year. If the rule had taken effect, 54,000 uninsured, low-income, working parents in Missouri could have had access to health insurance through Phase 1 of Insure Missouri next month.

“It is very disappointing that this request for an emergency rule, which would have allowed 54,000 working parents in Missouri access to health insurance as early as March, has been pulled by the Governor and the Department of Social Services.

“Missouri is still facing a health care state of emergency - more than 770,000 Missourians are currently uninsured. In the last year alone, our state has witnessed a 15 percent increase in the number of uninsured, a rate three times the national average.

“By pulling this request for an emergency rule, and not beginning enrollment of Phase 1 of Insure Missouri immediately, our state has lost an important opportunity to provide immediate, and overdue, health coverage to 54,000 uninsured, low income, working parents.

“The Members of the Missouri General Assembly now have a responsibility to begin addressing health care coverage for low income, uninsured Missourians immediately. Legislative leaders must move promptly, and in a bipartisan way, to make sure Phase 1 of Insure Missouri is implemented as quickly as possible, and to ensure funding for the program is prioritized in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget.

“Our elected officials must continue to strive for solutions to ensure that all Missourians who are living in poverty have access to comprehensive, quality health insurance as quickly as possible. We urge the Members of the General Assembly to take steps to ensure all individuals under 100 percent of the federal poverty level, including seniors and individuals with a disability, are provided with a health care solution in this legislative session.”

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*The Mission of the Missouri Budget Project is: To advance public policies that improve economic opportunities for all Missourians – particularly low and middle-income families – by providing reliable and objective research, public education and advocacy. More information is available at [www.mobudget.org](http://www.mobudget.org).*