

WASHINGTON - Congressman Lee Terry today expressed his concerns about H.R. 3162, the legislation the Democratic Leadership passed to reauthorize and expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which provides health care coverage to millions of low-income children.

**"I fully support reauthorizing SCHIP and urged an alternative bill to accomplish this goal because the Democratic Leadership's proposal focuses on another objective, which is to begin dismantling private sector health coverage, such as through a new tax that will be levied on private health care policies. Their proposal would also defund Medicare Advantage plans that support health care choice for senior citizens, which is a comparable plan to the choices for health insurance that all Federal employees enjoy," Terry said.**

As part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, SCHIP was established with a Republican Congress working with President Bill Clinton with the goal of insuring children in families earning up to 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level but earning too much money to qualify for Medicaid.

The House of Representatives today approved H.R. 3162 by a vote of 225 to 204. Congressman Terry voted against H.R. 3162 because it attacks both senior and pediatric private health care coverage while setting up a massive increase in Federal spending. He also expressed his concerns about H.R. 3162 allowing SCHIP coverage up to age 25, relaxing citizenship requirements for coverage, and removing the cap on Federal allotments to States. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that between Fiscal Year 2008 and Fiscal Year 2017, \$159.9 billion will be spent for SCHIP, compared to \$40 billion between Fiscal Year 1998 and 2007.

**"Even more egregious is that the Democratic Majority denied a Republican amendment that would ensure children who are already covered by private health care plans are not forced into government-paid health care," Terry said.**



