

Texas Update – May 2009 – Sine Die Edition

HB 2154 Passes!!

There is still time for CHIP Buy-In. Call now!

House Votes to Concur With Senate Amendments to HB 2154 – Urge the Governor to Sign

Congratulations everyone! Due to your hard advocacy work, HB 2154 has passed creating one of the richest loan repayment program for physicians in the nation. Physicians who practice in underserved areas and are Medicaid, Medicare, and CHIP providers are eligible to receive up to \$160,000 in loan repayment from the state of Texas over four years. Funding for the measure was provided in HB 4583, a provision that governs how state accounts are managed. The loan repayment program will receive enough money to support 225 physicians per year. The bill is now on its way to the governor for his signature. Please [contact](#) Governor Perry and ask him to sign HB 2154 into law.

Please Call Your Legislators ONE MORE TIME! Today is the final chance for the CHIP Buy-In Program

Today is the final day of the legislative session. **Please make one more call right now asking your representatives to pass the CHIP bill.** The fate of the CHIP bill will be tied with other key measures that must pass today, and it is important that lawmakers hear from us that they should put aside politics and pass a program that will benefit 80,000 Texas children. There must be 100 votes in the House to bring the bill up today.

Please call your [Representative](#) and Speaker Straus with the following message:

“Do not kill the CHIP bill. This issue is very important. We need a vote on the CHIP bill TODAY.”

Other Key Measures for FQHCs

This list will be updated and expanded in June’s update. However, for now, here are some key measures that passed this session that relate directly to FQHCs.

- SB 526 by Senator Nelson (House Sponsor Rep. Martinez) – Reauthorizing the FQHC Incubator program with changes allowing DSHS more flexibility in awarding funds. \$5 million per year of the biennium was included in the state budget.
- SB 1476 by Senator Ellis (House Sponsor Rep. Coleman) – Allows FQHCs to hire optometrists.
- Rider 56 – Family Planning Services at FQHCs. \$10 million set aside in Title V, X, and XX family planning funds remains in the budget.