



October 13, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in response to the October 13, 2010 Editorial, "Taxing Westchester" which shamefully links children's health insurance enrollment to an increase in property taxes. Senator Stewart Cousins and Assemblyman Kavanagh should be praised for their commitment to ensuring children have access to health coverage so that they may grow up healthy and go to school ready to learn. Of all the uninsured, children cost the least to cover. While children comprise 43 percent of all Medicaid enrollment they only account for 10 percent of all Medicaid spending. Further, counties were insulated from the costs of increasing coverage when the Legislature passed a statewide county cap on Medicaid spending in 2005. The bigger costs to concern ourselves with are the financial and moral costs of keeping children uninsured. Uninsured children are less likely to receive primary and preventive care, more likely to use emergency rooms for regular sources of care, and more likely to be diagnosed at a more advanced stage of a disease. With an estimated 322,000 uninsured children in New York, we should be doing more, not less, to helping ensure every child has access to health insurance.

Sincerely,

Emma Jordan Simpson, Executive Director
Children's Defense Fund-New York