

Altmire Pushes to Prohibit Benefits to Illegal Immigrants

(Washington, DC) - Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-4) worked to ensure that yesterday's Children's Health and Medicare Protection (CHAMP) Act will not provide access to Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for any illegal immigrants. Congressman Altmire pushed for specific language in the bill to prohibit illegal immigrants' access to these benefits by signing on to a July 31 letter to House Energy and Commerce Chairman John Dingell.

"I am pleased that the CHAMP Act is very clear in stating that no federal funds will be used to pay for Medicare and SCHIP benefits for individuals who are in this country illegally," said Rep. Altmire. "Congress should not reward illegal immigrants who have shown callous disregard for the laws of our country by allowing them to access American taxpayer-funded health care."

The bill includes a section entitled, "No Federal Funding for Illegal Aliens," and contains the following language: "Nothing in the CHAMP Act allows Federal payment for individuals who are not legal residents." The CHAMP Act will require audits of state Medicaid and SCHIP programs to assure that no federal funds are used for undocumented residents. In addition, the Act will require each state to determine the citizenship of the people covered in its Medicare and SCHIP programs.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved the CHAMP Act on Wednesday by a vote of 225 to 204. The legislation includes provisions authored by Rep. Altmire to eliminate the late enrollment penalty for low income seniors. The legislation also protects Medicare for America's seniors and reauthorizes SCHIP, ensuring millions of children receive the health care they need.