

NEWS

Senator Siplin Joins Push for KidCare Coverage

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ORLANDO – State Senator Gary Siplin and Florida Democrats, supported by dozens of uninsured Florida children, today unveiled a campaign to expand insurance to nearly 100, 000 children of working, low income parents who are languishing on a state waiting list for health insurance.

The campaign, which taps a little-know provision in Florida law that allows members of the Legislature to call themselves into special session, will force every state lawmaker to formally register their support or opposition to using federal funding to eliminate the current waiting list for KidCare, Florida's children's health insurance program.

Floridians can register their support for the move at www.floridachain.org/kidcare

Senator Siplin stated, "Instead out reaching out to the rich by providing them unneeded tax cuts after tax cuts, it is time that the uninsured and the underinsured receive assistance in providing healthcare for their children," "This is truly unfair and unjust, for the State of Florida to have 100,000 plus kids on the states ever increasing waiting list."

Under the law used today by Florida Democrats, 20 percent of the Legislature can petition the Secretary of State to call a special session to address a specific issue. After receiving the requisite number of petitions, The Secretary of State is required to poll every legislator, and if 3/5th of both legislative chambers agree, a session must be scheduled.

After the Republican-led Legislature approved a first-ever cap on the number of children who can purchase this insurance last year, the waiting list of uninsured children has skyrocketed to more than 100,000 children, multiplying by 5,000 new children each week. Democrats are asking to appropriate \$23 million in state funding to draw down current budget year. Insuring more children in this way eases the burden on hospital emergency rooms – often the last resort for parents without health care – and reduces the amount of costs passed onto consumers.

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