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## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

**CONTACT:** Anthony Wright  
916-442-2308 (office), 916-870-4782 (cell)

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### HEALTH ADVOCATES RAMP UP EFFORTS ON HEALTH 4ALL KIDS

- *In May, all income-eligible children will be eligible for Medi-Cal regardless of immigration status. Families can sign up for limited-scope emergency Medi-Cal today, and be part of the process to get comprehensive coverage mid-May.*
- *Senator Lara introduces bill, SB997(Lara) to ensure smooth transition and continuity of care for 70,000 children in Kaiser.*

Multiple efforts are building to help get all Californian children regardless of immigration status enrolled in comprehensive coverage starting in May, from encouraging families to sign children up for limited-scope Medi-Cal so they are ready when full-scope coverage expands in May, to efforts to make it easier to transfer children from existing charity care programs. This week Senator Ricardo Lara, chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, introduced legislation sponsored by Health Access, that would ensure that undocumented children who are currently cared for by the Kaiser Permanente Child Health Program and who are eligible for Medi-Cal can maintain their Kaiser coverage to avoid interruptions in coverage and access to care.

"History will be made in May, when every child in every playground, and in every classroom in California will have access to affordable coverage. Our goal is to make sure that vision of access turns into the reality of coverage and care," said Anthony Wright, executive director of Health Access California, the statewide health care consumer advocacy coalition. "Part of the goal is to ensure children in limited scope, local, or other charity care programs get seamlessly into the comprehensive Medi-Cal coverage that will be available. This bill by Senator Lara will take a big step, not just easily enrolling children now in the Kaiser program into the guarantees of Medi-Cal coverage, but ensuring they have continuity of care as well."

Last year's historic enactment of Health4All Kids (SB 4 Lara and AB 75 of 2015) allows all low-income California children regardless of immigration status to enroll in Medi-Cal. [SB 997](#) will ensure that the 70,000 children who currently have coverage through the Kaiser Permanente Child Health Program (KPCHP) do not face disruptions as they are switched to Medi-Cal. As Health4All Kids is implemented, this bill will guarantee that these "Kaiser kids" can maintain their Kaiser coverage to avoid interruptions in coverage and access to care.

In May, California will become the fifth state in the nation to expand affordable, quality health care to lower-income undocumented children. For the first time, Medi-Cal will be available to all lower-income children, ages 0-18, regardless of immigration status. The #Health4All Kids campaign will continue to educate undocumented and mixed immigration-status families in California about the upcoming expansion and the steps needed to ensure children can take full advantage of Medi-Cal's comprehensive coverage.

Families can begin enrolling eligible children into restricted-scope Medi-Cal now. Those enrolled will be automatically transitioned into comprehensive Medi-Cal, which will provide undocumented children with preventative health services, once the expansion takes effect in May. An eligible child does not need to have an urgent medical need to enroll. Medi-Cal enrollment, for all who are eligible, is open year-round.

Health Access California and the #Health4All campaign will continue its efforts to make sure all people in California, regardless of immigration status, have access to the health coverage and access to care that they need.

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