



SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY

EXHIBIT NO. 10

DATE: 1-21-05

BILL NO. SB 154

January 21, 2005

Senator Brent Cromley, Chairman
Public Health, Welfare and Safety Committee
State Capitol Building
Helena MT 59601

Support SB 154 Children's Health Insurance Program Administration

Chairman Cromley and members of the Committee:

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, my name is Claudia Clifford, advocacy consultant for AARP Montana. AARP is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization with more than 143,000 members in Montana.

In our December 2004 Membership survey 86% of our members said the #1 Legislative Priority was "Access to affordable, quality health care". Our members are very supportive of the Children's Health Insurance Program. On behalf of the 6,000 grandparents raising grandchildren in Montana, we urge this legislature to cover as many uninsured kids as is possible with available funding.

We support any effort to more efficiently administer the CHIP program, thereby having more funds to cover more kids. An estimated twenty-two thousand kids in Montana are without health care coverage. Hopefully this session you will appropriate more money to expand the CHIP program and efficient administration will enhance these efforts to provide health care to our children.