



**Children's Hospital Association of Texas**  
*An Association for the Advancement of Children's Healthcare in Texas*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Children's Hospitals in Texas Ask State Legislature to Maintain Medicaid Funding for Children**

AUSTIN, Texas – Children's hospitals in Texas are voicing concern about the major across-the-board cuts to Medicaid in the state legislature's recently released budget proposals. These hospitals, which are members of the Children's Hospital Association of Texas (CHAT), provide specialized care for the state's most ill children.

The proposed cuts to Medicaid funding will harm the ability of children's hospitals to provide clinical care, to train and recruit the specialized pediatric clinicians that children need, and to advance the quality of pediatric care through research and innovations in service delivery.

The preliminary budget proposed by the Texas Legislature includes a 10 percent cut in payments to doctors and hospitals for treating children covered by Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and eliminates the children's hospital Upper Payment Limit program.

"Children's hospitals heal children, save lives every day and care for children regardless of a child's family income or health insurance coverage. These cuts will undermine the ability of children's hospitals to see any child who needs specialized pediatric care," Bryan Sperry, president of CHAT, said. "Because of our fast-growing child population, now approaching seven million, children's hospitals in Texas have been challenged to build and develop the pediatric services that children need."

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Twenty-three percent of Texas children live in poverty. The recent recession has led to many families losing jobs and insurance coverage. Given the relatively low rate of privately insured children in Texas, children's hospitals rely heavily on Medicaid to pay for patient services. For the seven member hospitals of CHAT, which are all not-for-profit health corporations, over one-half of admissions are Medicaid patients.

"Texas' healthcare and budget challenges are many and we have confidence in the growth of the Texas economy in future years," Sperry said. "Our state's children deserve to grow up as healthy as possible and we should ensure that they continue to have access to top-quality medical care now and in the future."

For the last ten years, Texas has had the highest rate of uninsured children in the nation. More than 2.4 million children in Texas are enrolled in Medicaid and more than 500,000 are covered by CHIP.

**About the Children's Hospital Association of Texas**

The mission of the Children's Hospital Association of Texas (CHAT) is to support the development of an effective, comprehensive, high-quality and appropriately funded children's healthcare delivery system in Texas. Since 1989, CHAT has worked to advance its goals and public policy objectives in cooperation with other trade associations, advocacy groups, state agencies and the Texas Legislature. [www.childhealthtx.org](http://www.childhealthtx.org)