

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 11, 2009

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**GOVERNOR KAINE ANNOUNCES \$1 MILLION GRANT
TO INCREASE COVERAGE FOR UNINSURED
CHILDREN**

*~ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Provides funds to Help Maximize
Children's Enrollment in Health Insurance ~*

RICHMOND – Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced that the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) will receive \$1 million in funding and support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to increase enrollment and retention of eligible children in Virginia's health insurance programs, known as FAMIS and FAMIS Plus (children's Medicaid).

“This is great news for Virginia's families, especially during these difficult times when many are losing their health insurance, leaving their children uninsured,” Governor Kaine said. “Many families may need this bridge until they can afford health insurance again for their children. With the support of this grant, DMAS will be able to focus resources on retaining eligible children in our health insurance programs and on identifying new opportunities for maximizing enrollment.”

According to the most recent government data, 8.7 million children are uninsured in the United States, with most eligible for public health insurance, but not enrolled. In Virginia, it is projected that there are more than 120,000 eligible children not enrolled in the available health insurance programs. Virginia covers children up to 200 percent of the federal poverty limit or \$44,100 annual income for a family of four.

Virginia was one of eight states selected for the four-year RWJF grant, *Maximizing Enrollment for Kids*. Program leaders say that DMAS was selected because Virginia has demonstrated a strong commitment to increasing children's enrollment in health insurance, even in the face of difficult economic times. The *Maximizing Enrollment for Kids* program is being launched as states prepare to receive more federal support for their enrollment efforts from Congress's recent extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Under the direction of the National Academy for State Health Policy, which serves as the national program office for *Maximizing Enrollment for Kids*, a team of national experts will work with Virginia officials to identify ways to strengthen systems, policies, and procedures and establish best practices. The program will measure the impact of these changes and will share findings nationally throughout the four-year initiative.

“While all Americans need health coverage, it is especially important for children. Making sure that children have access to all their checkups and immunizations, as well as the care they need when they get sick, is critical to help them grow and learn,” said John R. Lumpkin, MD, MPH, Senior Vice-president and Director of the Health Care Group at RWJF. “Congress and President Obama have taken action to provide the resources for these children to have health insurance, now we need to do our part. We are partnering with Virginia and seven other states across the nation to increase enrollment and use their experiences to help others.”

For more information about *Maximizing Enrollment for Kids* or its grantees, visit www.maxenroll.org. For more information about the FAMIS programs go to www.famis.org, or for more information about DMAS and Virginia’s Medicaid programs, visit www.dmas.virginia.gov.

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