



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**FAMIS Spokesperson in Richmond to Promote *Cover The Uninsured Week 2007*
This Year's National Theme: SCHIP Reauthorization**

(RICHMOND, Va.)— Today, Julia, a mother of three children covered by the FAMIS programs and spokesperson for FAMIS was in Richmond to kick-off *Cover The Uninsured Week (CTUW) 2007*. CTUW, which runs April 23-29, is a national initiative sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that seeks to highlight the problem of the uninsured in the United States. Currently, nearly 45 million Americans have no health insurance, including more than 8 million children nationwide. Here in Virginia, there are over one million uninsured.

Nationally, this year's *Cover The Uninsured Week* campaign focuses on federal reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) which provides health insurance to more than 6 million children across the United States whose families earned too much to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to afford private insurance.

In Virginia, over 80,000 children are covered by SCHIP. FAMIS, the name for Virginia's separate SCHIP program, together with FAMIS Plus, Virginia's Medicaid program for children, now cover one in five Virginia children. That's more than 420,000 children statewide. In addition, more than 650 pregnant women are covered by the FAMIS MOMS program, which is also an SCHIP program.

(more)

Yet, even with increased efforts over the last several years to get uninsured children in Virginia covered, a new report recently estimated that there are still more than 90,000 uninsured children statewide who could qualify for FAMIS or FAMIS Plus. When asked why she thought these remaining families hadn't applied, Julia said,

I think sometimes people think that if they work, they aren't eligible, but a family of four, for example, can make up to \$41,300 a year and still qualify! Other people think that the application process is difficult or that they won't get good care. But it's easy to enroll. You can call the FAMIS toll-free number, apply online through the FAMIS website, or go to your local Department of Social Services. And your children get head-to-toe coverage with great access to great doctors and hospitals.

This year, CTUW highlights the success of programs like FAMIS and focuses on the need for federal reauthorization and funding of these SCHIP programs. Federal reauthorization and increased funding would allow Virginia to continue covering all the children currently enrolled and add those remaining 90,000 plus eligible uninsured children throughout the state.

To get more information, families can go to the FAMIS website at www.famis.org or call FAMIS toll-free at **1-866-87FAMIS (1-866-873-2647)**. A FAMIS representative can be reached Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.