

No Money for Needy Children's Healthcare in America

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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A previous article discussed the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) - covering healthcare for around nine million children and hundreds of thousands of pregnant women from low-income families - too high to qualify for Medicaid.

CHIP expired on September 30. Congress failed to renew it, states fast running out of funds to continue providing vital healthcare to needy recipients dependent on the program.

Social justice in America is being sacrificed to spend trillions of dollars on militarism and warmaking, trillions more on corporate handouts and tax cuts for them and super-rich households if congressionally passed legislation is signed into law - once differences between House and Senate bills are reconciled.

Sustaining CHIP requires authorizing \$8 billion to fund it, pocket change compared what Congress hands war-profiteers and the nation's privileged class.

Not according to GOP Senator Orin Hatch, saying

"(t)he reason CHIP is having trouble (passing) is because we don't have money anymore."

"We just add more and more spending and more and more spending, and you can look at the rest of the bill for the more and more spending."

At the same time, he said "(w)e're going to do CHIP...the right way" - meaning eviscerating the program, providing minimal funding, making it harder for needy families to qualify, and claim it continues as before - a shadow of what's needed.

Hatch signaled what's coming, adding he had a "rough time wanting to spend billions and billions and trillions of dollars to help people who won't help themselves, won't lift a finger, and expect the federal government to do everything."

Since enacted in 1997, funding never lapsed, except when GW Bush vetoed reauthorization of the program. Days later, Congress provided short-term funding, the program reauthorized in 2009.

If the GOP-dominated Congress fails to renew it, or guts the program, calling it reauthorization, millions of needy needy recipients could lose coverage.

According to Tricia Brooks, senior fellow at Georgetown University's Center on Children and Families, if Congress fails to reauthorize funding for CHIP before the year-end holiday period, it's "going to have a real chilling effect on our country's historic progress in covering children," adding:

Without congressional renewal this month, "(s)tates are either going to come up with more money to provide coverage for these kids or they are going to have to take steps to close down or temporarily freeze their programs."

GOP and undemocratic Dems disagree on how to fund CHIP, Republicans wanting money taken from the Affordable Care Act to pay for it. Dems rejected the idea.

According to projections by the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC), two states will run out of money this month.

Five more (and the District of Columbia) will exhaust their funding in early January, another 22 by March. By July, they'll all be out of funds except Illinois and Wyoming.

According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), responsible for administering CHIP, once states exhaust their funds, they'll have to decide which program recipients qualify for Medicaid.

They'll also have to choose between freezing enrollments in their healthcare programs or shutting them down entirely.

Millions of needy children and hundreds of thousands of pregnant women hang in the balance while Congress prioritizes helping the rich at the expense of the poor.

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My newest book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

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