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## **Bush's and Kuhl's Opposition to Children's Health Bill Will Cost Strapped New York Taxpayers \$19 Million This Year**

### **Kuhl Once Again Votes With Bush Instead of New York Children and Taxpayers**

**Albany** – The day after the release of an extremely tight state budget, and in the face of grim forecasts of an economic recession in 2008, representatives of Citizen Action of New York and Metro Justice blasted U.S. Representative John R. “Randy” Kuhl, Jr. (R-29<sup>th</sup> C.D.) for refusing to stand up for New York families that will be hit hardest by the ailing economy. Kuhl voted today to sustain President Bush’s veto of legislation that would have provided 400,000 more New York kids with health care. The two organizations also stated that the failure of Bush and Kuhl to do their share for New York children is putting pressure on already strapped New York taxpayers.

**“Randy Kuhl has once again stood with President Bush against the health care needs of New York children and their parents who pay taxes,”** said Richard Kirsch, Citizen Action of New York Executive Director. “This bill would have provided federal funding to cover almost all of the 400,000 uninsured New York children. **As a result of the actions of President Bush, Randy Kuhl and their Congressional allies, New York taxpayers will have to fork out the \$19 million it will cost to pay to pay for health care for New York kids. In a year when the state faces a multi-billion dollar deficit, I can’t understand why Randy Kuhl would want state taxpayers to take on this added burden.**”

On October 25th, the U.S. House passed the latest version of the bipartisan Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, which was revised in response to the President's first veto of the bill. Representative Kuhl also voted to sustain the first veto of the bill. In his budget, released yesterday, New York Governor Spitzer was forced to include \$19 million in additional funding for Child Health Plus (CHP) to cover the federal government's share of expansion of CHP to cover the 400,000 uninsured New York children, when the SCHIP reauthorization legislation was vetoed. CHP is New York's version of SCHIP.

“Bush’s veto couldn’t come at a worse time with a recession looming and millions of families soon facing extraordinarily difficult economic choices,” said Kirsch. “Representative Kuhl should stand up for children, his most vulnerable constituents. **And when the state is struggling to balance its budget, it simply makes no sense to turn down federal dollars for health care.**”

The override vote was 260-152 (19 not voting); the bill failed to get the required two-thirds vote, Forty-two Republicans voted with 218 Democrats in the override attempt.

**“It’s question of priorities, and Representative Kuhl has his all mixed up,”** said John

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Greenbaum, Metro Justice Organizer. "Representative Kuhl has no problem voting again and again to give President Bush a blank check to police an endless civil in Iraq. The fact is, for what the U.S. spends in just one week in Iraq, the 400,000 uninsured New York children could get health insurance for two years."

Citizen Action of New York is a statewide organization that works for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Metro Justice, an affiliate of Citizen Action, has close to 1,000 dues paying members in the Rochester area.