

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



Colorado Chapter

MEMO

To: Senator Betty Boyd**From: American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado Chapter****Date: April 22, 2009****Re: Support of HB 09-1111**

Dear Senator Boyd,

Please accept this letter from the Colorado Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) as an expression of support for HB 09-1111. The AAP is in favor of creating an Office of Primary Care within the Department of Public Health and Environment for several reasons.

- The Colorado AAP is intimately aware of the current shortage of primary care physicians, including pediatricians, in the state's rural areas. Currently only one-third of Colorado's counties have pediatricians. This shortage undermines the AAP's effort to promote medical homes for Colorado's infants and children. A medical home is vitally important for all children to have medical continuity throughout their development process.
- Under the current federal SCHIP matching program, Colorado receives \$2 for every \$1 spent on children in the CHP+ program. The AAP supports leveraging Colorado's existing spending on CHP+ and ensuring that all available federal dollars are drawn down to provide care to Colorado's children.
- Given the rising costs of medical school -- the median annual cost of attending a public medical school in 2008 was \$44,390*, up 6 percent from the previous year -- new physicians need additional assistance with loan repayment. Enhancing Colorado's current loan repayment program to incentivize new graduates to practice in rural areas is a win-win for both parties.

**Data from AAMC Tuition and Student Fees Survey, 2008*

Members of the Colorado Chapter of the AAP thank you for pursuing this innovative solution to address Colorado's rural health care shortage. We look forward to partnering with you to move this important legislation forward.