**From:** Template List [mailto:GOVERNORSUPDATE@LISTSERV.COV.VIRGINIA.GOV] **On Behalf Of** Gomer, Charlotte (GOV)
**Sent:** Monday, December 11, 2017 4:39 PM
**To:** GovernorsUpdate <GovernorsUpdate@LISTSERV.COV.VIRGINIA.GOV>
**Subject:** Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services to Notify CHIP Recipients of Potential Loss of Benefits Due to Congressional Inaction

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***Commonwealth of Virginia***

*Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date:  December 11, 2017

**Office of the Governor**

Contact: Brian Coy

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**Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services to Notify CHIP Recipients of Potential Loss of Benefits Due to Congressional Inaction**

**RICHMOND –** The Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) will begin notifying Virginia families with one or more family members who are enrolled in the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) that they could lose their coverage unless the United States Congress reauthorizes the program soon.

If Congress does not reauthorize CHIP funding, Virginia will run out of funding for its program, called FAMIS, on January 31st. The letters are intended to warn families of that possibility and inform them about steps they can take now to prepare while they wait for Congress to act. As of December 1st, there were 68,495 Virginia children and 1,114 pregnant women who stood to lose coverage if Congress fails to reauthorize funding for CHIP.

“It is truly shameful that gridlock and dysfunction in Congress have left nearly 70,000 Virginians who depend on the FAMIS program hanging in limbo,” **said Governor McAuliffe**. “After delaying these notifications to give Congress as much time to act as possible, Virginia has a responsibility to these families to inform them of the possibility that their coverage could lapse so they can be as prepared as possible to explore alternatives. It is past time for Congress to reauthorize this program so that these Virginians can have the certainty they deserve.”

The letter included below will be mailed tomorrow. A subsequent communication will be made in the event that Congress reauthorizes the CHIP program and no further action is necessary, or if they fail to reauthorize it and coverage will be terminated.