



## **Cover All Kids**

### **An Act to Ensure Equitable Health Coverage for Children (HB.1237/SB.740)**

**Lead Sponsors:** Rep. Dave Rogers and Sen. Sal DiDomenico

#### **Why is this legislation needed?**

- Approximately 30,000 children and young adults in Massachusetts cannot access the health care they need because of their immigration status. [Dylan](#) is one of these children.
- [Safety net programs](#) currently available to this population have limits on many services, such as mental health and dental care, prescription drugs and durable medical equipment (for example, wheelchairs). Other services are not covered at all, including home health care, eyeglasses, hearing aids and most therapies (for example, ABA, speech-language).
- Medicaid coverage in childhood [has been shown](#) to improve lifelong health, success in school and future earning potential.
- Inadequate coverage can lead to delayed care, worsening or new health conditions and use of more expensive care through emergency departments or longer hospital stays, [including in adulthood](#).
- [Twelve states](#) have passed similar policies: California, Washington, Oregon, Illinois, New York, Washington D.C., New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont, Rhode Island, Maine and Colorado. Massachusetts and New Hampshire are the only remaining New England states with Medicaid immigration status restrictions for all children.

#### **Why is this a health equity issue?**

- MassHealth covers many of the [state's most underserved](#) residents, but the program leaves out certain immigrants, even if they meet all other eligibility criteria.
- Coverage barriers put additional stress on immigrant families, who already face challenges accessing linguistically and culturally responsive care, experience [health disparities](#) and have been [disproportionately impacted](#) by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Access to comprehensive coverage and care is especially important for children with disabilities, complex health needs or chronic conditions.

#### **What does this legislation do?**

- This legislation would expand full MassHealth coverage to all Massachusetts residents under age 21 who are otherwise eligible, regardless of immigration status.

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