



**SAM GRAVES:**  
**BAD FOR KIDS IN**  
**THE 6<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT**



**Missouri Progressive Vote Coalition**

**February 2008**

St. Louis  
Mid Missouri  
Kansas City  
Springfield

5585 Pershing, Suite 150,  
611 N Garth Ave,  
4526 Paseo Ave,  
1219 E Commercial St,

St. Louis, Missouri 63112 314.531.2288  
Columbia, Missouri 65203 573.256.7701  
Kansas City, Missouri 64110 816.753-3044  
Springfield, MO 65803 417.873.9943

moprovote@mindspring.com  
midmoprovote@centurytel.net  
kcprovote@sbcglobal.net  
swmoprovote@sbcglobal.net

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

Missouri is currently facing a healthcare crisis. Representative Sam Graves (CD – 6) has consistently voted with the upside-down priorities of President Bush on healthcare. This report will explore the health care crisis and its effect on children in the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

## **MISSOURI HEALTH CARE CRISIS**

The number of uninsured Missourians skyrocketed at three times the national average between 2005 and 2006 according to US Census figures<sup>1</sup>. Children, in particular, have been negatively affected by a lack of healthcare. Multiple factors have contributed to this crisis in Missouri including increasing costs and bad policy decisions. Health care costs have consistently grown over the last eight years. Nearly 1 in 4 Missouri families will spend more than 10% of their pre-tax family income on health care costs in 2008<sup>2</sup>.

## **SCHIP GIVES CHILDREN HOPE**

The State Children's Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP, has benefited Missouri children and families since its inception. The program began in 1997 with strong bipartisan support. From 1997 through 2004, the number of uninsured kids dropped in Missouri by 2.5%. 33,563 fewer children were uninsured<sup>3</sup>.

Currently, more than 127,000 children currently do not have health insurance in Missouri. Almost 8% of Missouri's children are uninsured<sup>4</sup>. The SCHIP legislation agreed to by Congress would have covered 56% of Missouri's uninsured children<sup>5</sup>.

Each of Missouri's nine congressional districts has, on average, 14,111 children without health insurance. Expanding SCHIP would then have covered about 7,902 additional children in the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. Yet, Rep. Sam Graves has been a consistent vote against expanding health insurance for children.

- Congressman Graves voted against Children's Health Insurance
  - [HR 976, Vote #906, 9/25/07; passed 265-157]
- Congressman Graves voted to sustain Bush's veto
  - [HR 976, Vote #982, 10/18/07; failed 273-156]
- Congressman Graves voted against a revised SCHIP bill
  - [HR 3963, Vote #1009, 10/25/07; passed 265-142]
- Congressman Graves voted to sustain Bush's veto
  - [HR 3963, Vote #22, 1/23/08; failed 260-152]

## **CHILDREN BEAR THE BRUNT OF GRAVES' VOTES & THE REPUBLICAN AGENDA**

President Bush's and Governor Blunt's decisions to dismantle Missouri's healthcare have resulted in drastic changes to the state's Medicaid program and stopped efforts to make health insurance more affordable for Missouri children by opposing the expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

In 2005, Governor Blunt and the Republican-controlled legislature dismantled the state Medicaid program. They eliminated coverage for more than 100,000 Missourians and cut benefits and services for more than 300,000 additional Missourians.

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<sup>1</sup> Policy Brief #1: Uninsured Increased Significantly in Missouri in 2006, by over 103,500 (St. Louis: St. Louis University Center for Health Policy Analysis, August 2007)

<sup>2</sup> Families USA, Too Great a Burden: Missouri's Families At Risk, (November 2007)

<sup>3</sup> Cover the Uninsured, Protecting America's Future: A State by State Look at SCHIP & Uninsured Kids. (August 2007)

<sup>4</sup> Cover the Uninsured, Protecting America's Future: A State-by State Look at SCHIP & Uninsured Kids. (August 2007)

<sup>5</sup> Families USA, Kids Waiting for Coverage: How Many Are in Your State?, (September 2007)

St. Louis	5585 Pershing, Suite 150,	St. Louis, Missouri 63112	314.531.2288	moprovote@mindspring.com
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The Missouri Department of Social Services' Monthly Management Reports detail the drop of children covered by Medicaid or SCHIP in Graves' District. More than 61,000 children lost their coverage statewide. 19% of those children live in counties that are part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

Missouri's Sixth Congressional District consists of 26 counties: Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Caldwell, Carroll, Chariton, Clay, Clinton, Cooper, Daviess, DeKalb, Gentry, Grundy, Harrison, Holt, Howard, part of Jackson, Linn, Livingston, Mercer, Nodaway, Platte, Putnam, Schuyler, Sullivan, and Worth<sup>6</sup>.

In June 2005, the counties that compromise the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District had 113,270 children covered by Medicaid and SCHIP. Governor Blunt's Medicaid cuts went into effect on July 1, 2005. In October 2007, the most recent report available online, the same counties covered only 101,352 children. Therefore, almost 12,000 children in the counties in Sam Graves' district no longer receive public health insurance.

**KIDS CUT FROM MEDICAID & MC+  
JUNE 2005 – OCTOBER 2007<sup>7</sup>**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>KIDS COVERED IN JUNE 2005</b>	<b>KIDS COVERED IN OCTOBER 2007</b>	<b>NET CHANGE OF CHILDREN COVERED</b>
Andrew	969	762	-207
Atchison	547	369	-178
Buchanan	8,429	8,126	-303
Caldwell	962	671	-291
Carroll	1231	883	-348
Chariton	660	513	-147
Clay	11,650	10,633	-1,017
Clinton	1,238	1,060	-178
Cooper	1,252	1,161	-91
Daviess	874	743	-131
DeKalb	739	618	-121
Gentry	541	432	-109
Grundy	1,046	894	-152
Harrison	900	886	-14
Holt	475	389	-86
Howard	881	818	-63
Jackson	71,598	64,569	-7,029
Linn	1,391	1,032	-359
Livingston	1,422	1,162	-260
Mercer	304	276	-28
Nodaway	919	781	-138
Platte	3,220	2,893	-327
Putnam	510	417	-93
Schuyler	474	414	-60
Sullivan	824	653	-171
Worth	214	197	-17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113,270</b>	<b>101,352</b>	<b>-11,918</b>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.house.gov/graves/sixthdistrict.shtml>

<sup>7</sup> Missouri Family Support Division/MO HealthNet Division Monthly Management Report

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## **FAULTY LOGIC**

Congressman Graves uses the same rationale to oppose expanding SCHIP as President Bush and the same rationale that Governor Blunt used to cut Medicaid benefits and services for more than 400,000 Missourians. Graves uses the false argument to justify his repeated bad votes on SCHIP by claiming that people will leave private and employer-provided health insurance to get SCHIP<sup>8</sup>.

The facts show that employers are dropping coverage for children at a rate almost as fast as Congressman Graves and Governor Blunt can kick them to the curb. The number of families and children who receive health insurance through an employer has also dropped due to high costs<sup>9</sup>.

The number of Missouri kids covered via an employer has decreased between 2000 and 2006 from 1,009,339 to 848,679 children. That difference of 160,660 Missouri children who lost employer-based insurance is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest drop in the country. Employer-provided health insurance for children has decreased in Missouri from 71.4% to 61%, and the 10.4% decrease is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest percentage drop in the country.

## **CONCLUSION**

This report examines the health care crisis in Missouri under the stewardship of President Bush and Governor Blunt. Congressman Sam Graves has been a rubber stamp for the failed policies of both men leaving many Missouri children to fight for themselves for health insurance.

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<sup>8</sup> The Kansas City Star, "As I See It." (October 11, 2007)

<sup>9</sup> Economic Policy Institute, The Erosion of Employment-Based Insurance: More Working Families Left Uninsured, (November 2007)

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