

NEWS RELEASE  
Governor Jon S. Corzine  
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**GOVERNOR CORZINE ANNOUNCES OVER 11% DECREASE  
IN NEW JERSEYANS WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE**

*Number of Uninsured Rises 1.5% Nationally over Same Period, Credits Aggressive Enrollment Initiatives for Decline*

*Net Increase of New Jersey Children Receiving NJ FamilyCare Tops 90,000*

**NEWARK** – Governor Jon S. Corzine today announced that the number of New Jerseyans without health insurance has decreased by more than 11%, or 147,000 individuals, the second largest reduction in the nation between 2007 and 2008. At the same time, the number of uninsured in the U.S. rose by 1.5 percent, according to a U.S. Census report on the income, poverty and health insurance coverage in the United States in 2008.

The Governor credited aggressive initiatives aimed at enrolling those without health insurance for the declining New Jersey rate. He also credited the decrease to the landmark New Jersey Health Care Reform Act of 2008 that he signed into law last July which expanded health insurance eligibility and provided more access to affordable health insurance for all children.

“Families cannot build a strong economic future for their children without stable, secure and affordable health insurance and that is what our Administration has been working to accomplish,” Governor Corzine said. “In New Jersey, we are setting the national standard to ensure our families have secure and affordable health care and our children have a healthy start in life.

“We have ramped up our enrollment efforts and worked fervently by expanding NJ FamilyCare to include a child mandate. We said, ‘NO’ to the Bush administration when it tried to cut 10,000 kids out of New Jersey’s Family Care Program and we have implemented a new Express Lane option to reach and enroll every eligible child. Providing access to affordable health insurance and expanding eligibility has and will continue to be a priority of my Administration.”

Through the Governor’s initiatives, New Jersey continues to have eligibility for NJ FamilyCare set at 350% of the federal poverty level, which is one of the most generous levels in the nation. In addition, New Jersey expanded this program to cover all parents up to 200% of the federal poverty level. This has increased NJ FamilyCare/Medicaid enrollment for children and adults by 24 percent since 2006. As of August 31, 2009, 595,002 children and 244,104 parents were enrolled in NJ FamilyCare.

In addition, through the Health Care Reform Act of 2008, all children 18 and under are required to have health insurance through employer-sponsored insurance, Medicaid, NJ FamilyCare or NJ FamilyCare Advantage. The legislation also reformed private insurance to extend dependant coverage up to the age of 31.

Because of the Governor’s commitment, New Jersey has also become the first in the nation to take advantage of the new Express Lane Eligibility application authorized by the federal CHIP re-authorization in February 2009. Nearly 3,000 children have been enrolled in its first three months.

As a result of these efforts, the number of uninsured in New Jersey is down from 1.34 million to 1.2 million from 2006-2008. New York, Pennsylvania and Connecticut all saw increases in the number of uninsured over the same period.

”Today is evidence that New Jersey is at the forefront of addressing the national healthcare crisis,” said New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance Commissioner Neil N. Jasey. “Consistent with our mandate, DOBI strongly enforces existing New Jersey law, including Governor Corzine's recently passed healthcare reforms to ensure consumers are protected and insurance coverage is available.”

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has praised Governor Corzine for setting the national standard to cover more uninsured children. In a June newspaper editorial she said, “New Jersey did not wait to take action to help these children and their parents. Even before Washington acted, Governor Corzine signed health reform legislation that required all children to have health insurance and established a working group charged with reaching out to and covering more children. This was a key step that laid the foundation for extending insurance to more children.”

“We know that people with insurance get more appropriate preventive care, stay healthier, and live longer on average. This progress will save lives and strengthen our health care system,” said Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard.

The Obama Administration has committed an additional \$286 million for NJ FamilyCare as part of \$6 billion in new federal Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) funding.

The Governor also announced today that approximately 48,000 households in Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Monmouth and Ocean counties will be receiving NJ FamilyCare Express Lane applications by mail. He said that with this final mailing, approximately 290,000 applications have been sent to families who indicated on their 2008 state tax forms that at

least one child in the household was uninsured. More than 14,000 of the easy Express Lane enrollment forms have been returned to the Department of Human Services.

“We’ve been delighted by the response from our previous mailings and we’re confident this final stage will draw even more families,” said Department of Human Services Commissioner Jennifer Velez. “Our goal remains to enroll every eligible child until there are none left.”

NJ FamilyCare is a free or low-cost program for income-eligible families. For instance, a family of four earning up to \$77,175 (or 350 percent of the federal poverty level) can qualify to insure their children for about \$130 a month in the state- and federally-funded program.

NJ FamilyCare ADVANTAGE is a “buy-in” program for families earning more than 350 percent of the federal poverty level. The maximum monthly premium is \$411 for a family with three or more children.

For more information on the NJ FamilyCare programs, call 1-800-701-0710 or visit [www.njfamilycare.org](http://www.njfamilycare.org).

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Video from the Governor's Office is available at [www.nj.gov/governor/news/video](http://www.nj.gov/governor/news/video) and [www.youtube.com/user/jonscorzine](http://www.youtube.com/user/jonscorzine)