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March 11, 2014

## Child well-being legislation still under consideration at State House

The Senate Judiciary Committee will continue consideration of other important child abuse and safety measures. These bills have been carried over from previous committee meetings. The committee is scheduled to meet at 3 p.m., on Tuesday, March 11.

[S 864](#) would establish in S.C. Code of Law the Children's Advocacy Medical Response System. This program, already functioning, coordinates and provides medical service resources to agencies statewide that respond to cases of child abuse and neglect. The companion bill [H 4347](#) unanimously passed the House last week.

[S 841](#) prohibits giving medication to children in a child care facility (unless given parental permission) and outlines penalties for violation. This bill is modeled after Nate's Law, where an infant died after being given a sedative medication at nap time by a child care provider in Texas

[H 3024](#) adds professions to the list of mandated reporters (college administrators, coaches, firefighters) and increases the fine for not reporting. [H 3124](#) prevents employers from disciplining or terminating a mandated reporter for making a report.

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## Bill to Block Medicaid Could Impact Important Home Visiting Programs

The Senate began debate last week on [H. 3101](#) which seeks to prevent the state from expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. Sen. Tom Davis, R-Beaufort, has proposed a "strike all and insert" amendment that would rewrite the current legislation.

One section of the amendment would restrict state agencies and others from applying for federal grant funding under the Affordable Care Act. Children's Trust is concerned how this legislation might impact important home visiting work in South Carolina.

As often happens, when a bill is moving quickly through Congress, additional provisions are added, especially when they have bi-partisan support. Home visiting had that bi-partisan support, and it was added to the controversial Affordable Care Act.

Home visiting is a proven, early-intervention strategy that works through a wide variety of program models. Home visiting serves at-risk, low-income families in South Carolina working to create a better future for their children and themselves. These mothers and fathers are working on their positive parenting skills, going back to school, learning how to stay healthy, understanding how to keep their children safe, and connecting to supports in their communities.

As our state legislators talk of nullification and work to reverse the Affordable Care Act, home visiting could be the collateral damage in this fiercely divided debate. The Senate will continue its debate on the bill this week. Several organizations are working to oppose the bill.

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## Home visiting advocates urged to voice support on Wednesday, March 12

National Day of Action for MIECHV Reauthorization scheduled for this week.

The Association Of Maternal And Child Health Programs will host a National Day of Action on Wednesday March 12, urging advocates across the country to contact Congress with the message to reauthorize the MIECHV program.

This important program serves at-risk, low income mothers and provides them with information on maternal and child health, positive parenting practices, safe home environments and access to support services.

In South Carolina, the MIECHV program has served 477 families and made 4,336 home visits in 23 counties from Oct. 1, 2012 to Sept. 23, 2013.

The program will expire Sept. 30 unless Congress acts. Follow us on twitter at @ChildrensTrustS for more information on how to take action on March 12.

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## President Releases Federal Budget

President Obama released his [federal budget proposal for fiscal year 2015](#).

Highlights for children include:

- \$500 million for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV), an increase from last year's \$380 million
- \$634 million for the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant
- \$25 million Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act State Grants
- \$11 million to Children's Advocacy Centers and \$6 million to Court Appointed Special Advocates
- \$10 million to protect vulnerable youth and domestic sex trafficking (new this year)

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## April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and Children's Trust will Kick-Off 30th Anniversary

[Statehouse event scheduled for noon, Thursday, April 3, in Rotunda](#)

Children's Trust will celebrate our 30th anniversary with a kick-off press conference at the Statehouse. We will also mark the beginning of Child Abuse Prevention Month with Pinwheels for Prevention.

All are encouraged to attend and to stand with us as we work to substantially decrease the number of confirmed cases of child abuse, neglect and unintentional injuries.

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## Child Welfare News from Around the Country

[Ohio's Child-Entitlement Law Declared Unconstitutional](#)

The Ohio Supreme Court ruled 5-2 against a section of that state's child-entitlement law. As written, the law made it illegal for anyone in Ohio, regardless of intent, to ask a child to accompany them into a vehicle or building without their parents' consent. The court found the law ruled that the law improperly convert "innocent situations" and "constitutionally protected activity" into potential crimes.

[Major issues with North Carolina's Union County Child Welfare Program](#)

A North Carolina state review of the Union Country Department of Human Services has indicated numerous failures in the agency's operations over the past three years. State health officials conducting reviews found a lack of quality control and many cases of missing or incomplete documentation.

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Policy Post is published by Children's Trust of South Carolina.

We invite you to join with us to strengthen and support public and private prevention efforts that keep South Carolina's children safe.

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