



HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES
Coalition of Georgia

2010 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- **Protect funding for the Babies Born Healthy Program.** Babies Born Healthy is the only government program that pays for prenatal care for low income pregnant women who do not qualify for Medicaid and in recent years the program has consistently run out of funds before the fiscal year ends. Women who are eligible but are not served due to lack of funds usually end up appearing at a hospital to deliver their baby having had no prenatal care. Since their babies are Medicaid eligible, Medicaid bears the cost of any disabilities or health conditions that these babies may have. HMHB strongly recommends maintaining funding for Babies Born Healthy. The program saves Medicaid money and Georgia will have healthier babies.
- **Enhance Medicaid services for Georgia women by obtaining a federal waiver for the Planning for Healthy Babies Program.** As of September 2009, 27 states have obtained a Medicaid 1115 Demonstration Waiver, which enhances services to Medicaid eligible women by providing interconceptional family planning to mothers for two years following a Medicaid birth. Currently in Georgia, post partum Medicaid family planning services are only provided for 60 days. The Planning for Healthy Babies Program, which would provide 90% federal dollars matched with 10% state dollars, would aim to reduce Georgia's low birth weight rate and the number of unintended pregnancies in women who otherwise would be eligible for Medicaid pregnancy related services. \$250,000 in state funds was included in the FY 2010 budget as seed money for this effort, but Georgia needs additional matching funds in order to obtain this waiver.
- **Oppose legislation that threatens health insurance benefits such as mammograms, pap smears, and childhood immunizations.** Many of the current state mandates are for services that ensure prevention and early detection of disease. Bills have been introduced in recent years that would allow health insurance to be sold in Georgia without covering such services. HMHB continues to oppose such legislation.
- **Monitor legislation and policy changes that impact services for Medicaid and PeachCare clients.** In recent years legislation that would reduce eligibility and benefits for PeachCare has been introduced and the economic downturn threatens adequate funding for the Medicaid program as well. Medicaid and PeachCare ensure access to health care for many low income Georgians. HMHB opposes reductions in eligibility or benefits in Medicaid and PeachCare.
- **Protect funding for pediatric vaccines for underinsured children.** Proposed budget cuts threaten funding for the Division of Public Health's Immunization program that provides a variety of vaccines to underinsured children and youth. Immunizations save lives and prevent disease. Making sure that all children and youth have access to immunizations is important in order to prevent illness and the spread of disease to others.
- **Support funding for a statewide trauma care system.** Access to trauma care is a matter of life and death but Georgians in many areas do not have access to fast trauma care. HMHB supports the creation of a statewide trauma care system.
- **Support legislation to increase the state's tobacco tax.** For details, see the Resolution HMHB has signed with the American Cancer Society, et al.