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[Click here to visit our website](#)

### More SCHIP information

<http://ccf.georgetown.edu/index>  
[www.piconetwork.org](http://www.piconetwork.org)

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## PICO calls on Congress to put children's health first on President Obama's agenda

Greater Long Beach ICO is joining with PICO affiliates nationwide calling on Congress to pass a strong State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) reauthorization bill immediately so that it can be the first piece of legislation to land on the desk of incoming President Barack Obama.

When President Bush vetoed the SCHIP reauthorization in 2007, the legislation was extended to March, 2008. However, thousands of children who previously had coverage found that coverage at risk. A new, strong SCHIP reauthorization is required quickly so that children don't lose the continuity of coverage that is so key to longterm health.

On Wednesday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a strong SCHIP reauthorization that included two elements that ICO and PICO considered key. It:

- Extends for at least four years so states can structure local programming to cover all uninsured children; and,
- Eliminates the five-year waiting period for legally-documented immigrant children.

The efforts of ICO and other PICO affiliates over the past two years have brought us to the brink of an important victory. But, as before, we and our allies in the children's health and religious communities will need to work hard to make sure that the U.S. Senate passes a bill as strong as the House and puts it on the new President's desk soon.

For more information, click on the links on the left, and to be put through to the Congressional switchboard, call the PICO Cover All Children Hotline – (202) 350-9734

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## St. Matthew's to host immigration forum



St. Matthew's Catholic Church will host an immigration forum in February. The forum will focus on immigrants' legal rights and the citizenship process.

The forum is scheduled for Sunday, February 8, 2009, starting at 2:00 p.m. For more information, contact St. Matthew's at (562) 439-0931, or ICO Community Organizer [Xochitl Hernandez](#).

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## Coming February 7: ICO's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting



Check your inbox or your mailbox for more information about ICO's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting, coming February 7 to First Congregational Church UCC.

We will, as in years past, celebrate the diversity and vibrancy that is at the core of our work. Member congregations are encouraged to bring at least two dishes that are emblematic of their cultural heritage, with enough made to serve 30 people. We are also looking for donations and gift baskets to feature both in our raffle and in our silent auction.

Finally, and most importantly, we are looking for you. We need volunteers for set-up and clean-up, to manage the auction and raffle, and to coordinate donations, food and entertainment. And, above all, we are looking for you to come and join us as we celebrate ICO's gifts.

So, join us for food, fellowship and fun. Contact your local ICO leader or us at the ICO office, to be part of the annual meeting. And don't forget to visit our website for more information and updates.

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