

## **Group issues report on insurance coverage for kids**

*by O.Kay Henderson*

Several groups are staging events in Des Moines today (Friday) to try to steal some of the spotlight from the National Governors Association meeting, which kicks off tonight. The first group to launch such a gambit is "Every Child Matters" and they got Iowa's governor, Tom Vilsack, to join in the release of a new survey. "We are here today to talk about an extraordinarily important subject not just to Iowans but to all of America and that is the need for children in America to have coverage and insurance," Vilsack said to open the news conference. According to "Every Child Matters" founder Michael Petit, over nine million children in America have no healthcare insurance. A survey commissioned by his group found 90-percent of Americans believe the government should fix the problem. "They're concerned about it," Petit said. "They're frustrated that Congress isn't addressing this issue." Dr. Julianne Thomas, a Cedar Rapids pediatrician, sees patients every day whose parents cannot afford health insurance. "I see that they delay care, that they are not able to fill prescriptions and often are ashamed to admit that to us that the prescription we've given them will never be filled because they can't afford it," Dr. Thomas said. Kathy McFarlin of Des Moines said at least one fifth of the students in the school where she worked as a nurse last year had no insurance. "We just would ask that as the governors come together that they would provide the leadership that we need on this topic," McFarlin said. More than 30 governors are scheduled to be in Des Moines for the NGA meeting which runs through Monday. They'll talk policy, share ideas and mingle with political insiders in events that are closed to the public.