The Children’s Health Insurance Program – also known as CHIP – has figured prominently in the deliberations on keeping the federal government open. Reporting today by Governing magazine says that the details of the vote later today have not been made public, so the fate of the six-year funding appropriation for CHIP that was included in the House continuing resolution is unclear.

Over 8 million children receive health insurance coverage through CHIP programs in the states. CSG adopted a policy resolution at its 2017 National Conference urging the federal government to continue funding of the program.

A blog post over the weekend by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families said that 24 to 28 states could run out of funding in March if the program does not receive appropriations. Their own research found that six states – Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Utah and Virginia – have gone public with announcements about plans to freeze coverage or shut down the program.

Joan Alker from Georgetown University explains in her blog post that many states cannot eliminate coverage of children if CHIP funding runs out – the impact will be muted in the majority of states where CHIP is a Medicaid expansion program (rather than a separate state program as in Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Florida. Instead, given the maintenance of effort provisions of the Affordable Care Act, the funding of the children’s health care services will be provided under the “regular” Medicaid program. This means states will receive a significantly lower match rate under Medicaid than they do under the enhanced CHIP matching rate. This will be a budget problem for states.