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**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS**
of New York State

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF:
A. 734 / Gottfried

TO: ASSEMBLY HEALTH COMMITTEE
DATE: FEBRUARY 3, 2009

Subject: *An act to amend the public health law, in relation to school-based health centers.*

The League of Women Voters of New York State supports this bill that would enhance the provision and availability of primary care services provided to eligible children under the Child Health Plus (CHP) program by School-based Health Centers.

School-based health services offer important primary and preventive health care to preschool and school age children. The League believes that early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. School-based health clinics partially fulfill a need in the delivery of health care services, particularly for children in low income, high-risk communities. This bill would expand the availability of services covered under the CHP program to assure that children have access to necessary primary health and mental health care services. The bill requires coordination with the primary care practitioner by providing that the SBHC discuss any services or treatment with such practitioner.

In addition, the bill establishes a grant program to permit SBHCs to facilitate the enrollment of children who are eligible for CHP, Medicaid and FHP in these programs. It is estimated that at least one-half of the 3.1 million individuals who are uninsured in this State are currently eligible for CHP, Medicaid, or FHP. School-based Health Centers are located where the children are in the schools, and could be an important part of the solution to the problem of the uninsured.

The League's goals of access to quality health care, health promotion, and disease prevention among New Yorkers of all ages are well served by the early intervention and prevention services provided by school-based health clinics that can also serve students covered under CHP.

For the above reasons, the League of Women Voters of New York State strongly urges your support of A.734.