



**National Federation of Federal Employees,
IAMAW, AFL-CIO**



**Health Care for Children of Federal Employees until Age 25
(H.R. 2978)**

Position: Under current law, the federal government's Health Benefits Program only covers the children of federal employees under the age of 22. Since young adults at this age are typically finishing college, pursuing their first jobs, or holding jobs with few to no benefits, this premature age cutoff leaves countless individuals with improper health care coverage. Moreover, it places the burden of finding and financing health care on the families of federal employees. H.R. 2978 would help to eliminate these burdens by increasing the cutoff age for the children of federal employees from 22 to 25. NFFE-IAM strongly supports this legislation.

H.R. 2978 would increase the maximum age at which the children of federal employees are eligible to receive full health care coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Following the implementation of the proposed legislation, the unmarried dependent children of federal employees would qualify for full health benefits up until the age of 25.

Under current law, the federal government stops providing health care to the children of federal employees as soon as they reach the age of 22. This poses many problems for the families of federal workers since young adults infrequently have access to jobs with full health benefits. In fact, at this age, these individuals are typically finishing their college careers, applying for their first jobs, or holding jobs with limited health care coverage. Consequently, the burden of finding and financing health care for their children falls upon the families of federal employees.

By raising the cutoff age from 22 to 25, the federal government would remove this burden from the families of federal employees as their children transition from college to full-time careers with adequate health care coverage. This legislation is of particular relevance today as the global economic downturn both undermines the financial well-being of federal workers' families and severely limits the prospects of employment for young adults.

The further extension of health benefits to the children of employees has become a fairly common practice in the public sector. Already, the governments of 17 states have further extended health care coverage to the dependents of their employees.

Not only would this legislation provide financial relief for thousands of federal workers and their families, but, through the granting of health benefits to young adults, it would also serve as a bold precedent for future health care reform.