

## A difficult direction

**I**t sounds insensitive to support the state of Oregon in its idea of suspending an effort to get uninsured children into government health coverage. But what's worse: Failing to recruit people for a program, or recruiting them for a bankrupt program?

That's the fear of state officials who are considering giving back part of a private grant meant to get kids enrolled in the new federal Children's Health Insurance Program.

That program still has money, but Oregon Health Plan enrollment is already over budget predictions. Officials

worry that further outreach for CHIP will also bring people into the state health plan, stretching it to the breaking point.

It's a disturbing situation. Obviously, the state should first look for ways to more narrowly recruit for CHIP. Further, it shouldn't stonewall or turn away people who on their own seek out information or enrollment for either program.

But until the state is sure it can adequately serve all the people it encourages to sign up, it would be justified in tempering that encouragement.

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