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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**13th Annual Luncheon Celebrates the Continued
Success of Rlte Care**

***U.S. Senator Reed, U.S. Representative Langevin,
Lt. Governor Roberts, and other elected officials and community
leaders to attend Celebration of Children's Health***

***Pamela High, MD (Hasbro Children's Hospital), the Rhode Island
Health Center Association, and Rhode Island Parent Information
Network to receive Community Leader Awards***

Providence, RI (November 4, 2013) – More than 175 community leaders, elected officials, and health care experts gathered for the thirteenth annual *Celebration of Children's Health Luncheon* to celebrate the progress that Rhode Island has made in achieving positive health outcomes for children. This event highlighted the continued success and importance of Rlte Care, Rhode Island's health insurance program for low- and moderate-income children and families.

Covering Kids Awards were presented to elected officials and community partners for their contributions to increasing access to health insurance coverage and health care for children, including U.S. Senator Jack Reed, U.S. Representative James Langevin, Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts, Senate President Teresa Paiva Weed, Senator Gayle Goldin, Representative Frank Ferri, Representative Joy Hearn, Representative Raymond Hull, Representative Deborah Ruggiero, Mayor Scott Avedisian, and Mayor Angel Taveras.

Pamela High, MD, Director of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics at Hasbro Children/Rhode Island Hospital received a *Covering Kids Award* for her longstanding commitment to ensuring that Rhode Island children are screened and treated for developmental and behavioral health care issues. The Rhode Island Health Center Association and the Rhode Island Parent Information Network received *Covering Kids Awards* for their long history of work toward providing access to high quality, comprehensive health coverage to Rhode Island's children and families.

The *Celebration of Children's Health Luncheon* highlights the importance of comprehensive health coverage in achieving positive health outcomes for Rhode Island children. With 94% of children covered, Rhode Island continues to be ranked 10th best in the nation for children's health insurance coverage. In Rhode Island between 2010 and 2012, there were an average of about 147,000 Rhode Island children under age 18 who were

covered by private health insurance, about 84,000 Rhode Island children who were covered by some form of public insurance, including RIte Care, and 13,000 children who were uninsured. The percentage of all children in Rhode Island who were covered by their parents' employer-sponsored health coverage was 61.8% between 2010 and 2012.

Rhode Island has been able to maintain its high children's health insurance coverage rates thanks in part to RIte Care, which offers an affordable health coverage option for children and families who would not have access to affordable, high quality health insurance.

"RIte Care continues to be a national model for its success in ensuring that Rhode Island's vulnerable children and families receive high-quality and affordable health insurance coverage," stated Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. "As the continuum of health coverage options grows and changes, RIte Care remains a key cornerstone for children in Rhode Island to get access the care and services they need to stay healthy."

At today's *Celebration of Children's Health*, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT released a new report – *RIte Care Results* – which documents the successes of RIte Care, including:

- **Children and adults with Medicaid coverage have significantly lower percentages of emergency admissions to the hospital than the uninsured.** Thirty-nine percent of admissions to the hospital for Medicaid members are emergencies, compared to 83% for the uninsured.
- **Children with RIte Care have fewer preventable hospitalizations than uninsured children.** The percentage of preventable hospitalizations for Rhode Island children who were uninsured nearly tripled between 2001 and 2011 (from 7% to 20%), while preventable hospitalizations for children with RIte Care coverage decreased by a third from 12% to 8%.
- **Healthier pregnancies and healthier babies.** Fewer women with RIte Care coverage smoke during pregnancy, which can increase the likelihood of poor birth outcomes. The percentage of women covered by RIte Care who smoked during pregnancy decreased by 53% between 1993 and 2011, from 32% to 15%. The infant mortality rate also dropped from 9.8 infant deaths per 1,000 births in 1993 to 7.7 infant deaths per 1,000 births in 2011.

"The latest data show that RIte Care continues to work for children, pregnant women, and parents," stated Bryant. "The public investments, outreach efforts, and quality standards that Rhode Island has used to ensure our children and families are healthy must be preserved and built upon as Rhode Island implements the Affordable Care Act in order to cover more children and adults in our state."

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Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is a statewide children's policy organization that works to improve the health, economic well-being, safety, education and development of Rhode Island children.