

February 2015

Dear Representative,

The dental professional organizations listed below, as members of the Organized Dentistry Coalition, are writing to express our strong support for H.R. 539, the Action for Dental Health Act of 2015.

The bill will allow organizations to qualify for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) oral health grants to support activities that improve oral health education and dental disease prevention and develop and expand outreach programs that facilitate establishing dental homes for children and adults, including the elderly, blind and disabled.

In 2010, 181 million Americans didn't see a dentist. More than 50 percent of Americans over the age of 30 suffer from some form of gum disease. Estimates suggest that 25 percent of children under the age of five already have cavities. H.R. 539 would support initiatives that have the greatest impact on dental access disparities, including:

- Supporting charitable programs like Give Kids A Smile and Missions of Mercy, through which dentists directly provide care to disadvantaged children and adults who are suffering from lack of dental care today;
- Reducing the number of people who visit the emergency room for dental conditions, by referring them to dental practices, where they can receive proper dental care;
- Expanding access to care for the vulnerable elderly in nursing homes;
- Ensuring more Americans have access to drinking water with fluoride; and
- Strengthening collaborations with other health professionals and organizations.

On behalf of our member dentists and their patients we urge you to cosponsor H.R. 539, the Action for Dental Health Act of 2015.

Sincerely,

American Dental Association
Academy of General Dentistry
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Periodontology
American Association for Dental Research
American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Women Dentists
American College of Prosthodontists
American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists
National Dental Association