

June 3, 2010

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

As you begin implementing sections 4102 and 5303 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), our organizations strongly urge you to allocate at least \$93 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Oral Health (DOH) for FY 2011 and \$30 million to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for Fiscal Year 2011. These allocations would enable federal dental programs to begin carrying out needed prevention and dental education programs in the PPACA.

- ***Five-year national prevention education campaign.*** The PPACA directs the Department to begin planning a five-year national public education campaign in March of this year, focused on prevention and education and targeted oral health improvements for specific populations including young children, pregnant women, and individuals with disabilities. We urge you to invest at least \$5 million in FY 2011, as authorized, to ensure that this long overdue public education campaign is underway by 2012.
- ***Disease management demonstration grants.*** The PPACA directs the Department to award grants to demonstrate the effectiveness of research-based dental caries disease management, specifically to develop and promote strategies that address suppression of early childhood tooth decay. We urge you to set aside at least \$8 million in FY 2011 for these grants, which will help health professionals, communities and insurers invest in earlier, smarter, more targeted dental caries interventions and to more effectively transfer science to practice.
- ***School-based sealant program grants.*** The PPACA requires that ALL states – as well as territories and Indian tribes – receive grants for school-based dental sealant programs. To support this requirement, CDC will need at least \$15 million in FY 2011. A portion of these funds will be used to hire a full-time sealant coordinator and initiate efforts to build sealant placement teams that target schools with large numbers of underserved children.

School-based dental sealant programs provide sealants to children at high risk for dental decay who are less likely to receive private dental care. National data indicate that only 1 in 5 children from low-income families currently have sealants. These children, however, are nearly twice as likely as their higher-income counterparts to have had decay in their permanent teeth.

Children receiving dental sealants in school-based programs have 60% fewer new decayed pit and fissure surfaces in back teeth for up to 2–5 years after a single application. Currently, only 17 states have school-based sealant programs that reach 25% or more of the high-risk schools in their states.

- ***Oral health infrastructure cooperative agreements.*** The PPACA authorizes the CDC to expand its support of an oral health infrastructure program from 16 to ALL states, as well as territories and Indian tribes. These foundational programs create leadership, program guidance, oral health data collection and data interpretation. We urge you to support this program with an investment of at least \$25 million in FY 2011.
- ***Oral health surveillance.*** The PPACA recognized the need to improve oral health reporting and ensure that federal survey tools include appropriate oral health questions. We ask that you include at least \$5 million in FY 2011 to update and improve oral health reporting in the Pregnancy Risk

Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), the Medical Expenditures Panel Survey (MEPS) and the National Oral Health Surveillance System (NOHSS).

- ***Community water fluoridation.*** We ask that you provide at least \$35 million in FY 2011 to bolster the CDC's successful community water fluoridation infrastructure program. Most of these funds would be used to subsidize the purchase of fluoridation equipment and provide training for water plant operators and state water engineers.

Community water fluoridation, which adjusts the fluoride in water to a level sufficient for preventing and controlling tooth decay, reduces tooth decay by 30–50%. At a savings of about \$23–\$26 per person per year, this translates to national annual savings in dental treatment costs of more than \$4 billion annually.

Although great progress has been made, nearly 28% of public water systems do not have the capacity to deliver – and approximately 100 million Americans do not have access to – optimally fluoridated water. Many communities need support to upgrade or purchase new water systems and fluoridation equipment. In fact, more than 30 states have identified communities that need to upgrade aging fluoridation equipment. Others, such as Louisiana, have unfunded mandates to fluoridate water systems. In Louisiana alone, additional funding for fluoridation equipment could extend fluoridation to more than 2 million people.

- ***Training in General, Pediatric and Public Health Dentistry.*** The new “Training in General, Pediatric and Public Health Dentistry” health professions program supports funding for the development and operation of advanced training programs for general, pediatric and public health dentists; provides educational assistance for students; enhances faculty development; and provides faculty loan repayment. We recommend these programs be funded at the authorized amount of \$30 million.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to explore how our organizations can help optimize federal investments in the nation's dental public health infrastructure. Should you have any questions or wish to arrange a meeting, please contact Ms. Judy Sherman at the American Dental Association 202-789-5164 or shermanj@ada.org.

Sincerely,

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American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
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American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Orthodontists
American Association of Public Health Dentistry
American College of Prosthodontists
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors
Hispanic Dental Association
National Dental Association

June 3, 2010

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services and
Education Committee
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services and
Education Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

As you begin considering FY 2011 appropriations for implementing sections 4102 and 5303 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), our organizations strongly urge you to allocate at least \$93 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Oral Health (DOH) and \$30 million to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). These allocations would enable federal dental programs to begin carrying out needed prevention and dental education programs in the PPACA.

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 American Dental Association
 American Dental Education Association
 Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors
 Hispanic Dental Association
 National Dental Association

June 3, 2010

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services and
Education Committee
131 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services and
Education Committee
156 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Cochran:

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