

**Meeting Minutes of the
American Dental Association
Council on Government Affairs
June 4, 2019 VET CARE Bill Council Call**

This meeting of the Council on Government Affairs, and was conducted via conference call and was called to order by Dr. Craig Armstrong, CGA chair, at 4:27 pm EST, Tuesday, June 4th.

ROLL CALL

Members: (District 2) Dr. Lauro Medrano-Saldana, 2019; (District 3) Dr. John Reitz, 2021; (District 4) Dr. Mark Vitale, 2022; (District 5) Dr. Deborah Bishop, 2020; (District 6) Dr. Leon Stainslav, 2022; (District 7) Dr. Matthew Messina, 2021; (District 8) Dr. Phillip Fijal, 2020; (District 10) Dr. Lisa Knowles, 2020; (District 11) Dr. John Hisel, 2022; (District 12) Dr. Matthew Cohlma, 2022; (District 14) Dr. David White, 2021; (District 15) Dr. Craig Armstrong, Chair 2019; (District 16) Dr. Daniel Cheek, 2019; (District 17) Dr. Zack Kalarickal, 2020; Dr. Robin Nguyen, New Dentist Member

Liaisons: Dr. Daniel Klemmedson, Board of Trustees (District 14); Ms. Lauren Yap, American Student Dental Association; Dr. Tommy Harrison, Chair, American Dental Political Action Committee; Ms. Janette Sonnenberg, Alliance of the American Dental Association; Dr. Maria Geisinger, Vice Chair, Council on Scientific Affairs

Not in attendance: Dr. Mark Desrosiers (District 1); Dr. Emily Willett (District 9); Dr. Ariane Terlet (District 13); Dr. Richard Herman, Chair, Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention

Council Staff: Mr. Michael Graham, Senior Vice President, Government & Public Affairs; Ms. Roxanne Yaghoubi, Interim Director; Mr. Bob Burns, Manager; Ms. Emily Wright, Senior Project Assistant

Other ADA Staff present for phone call: Mr. Chris Tampo, Director, Congressional Affairs; Ms. Natalie Hales, lobbyist, Congressional Affairs; Ms. Megan Mortimer, lobbyist, Congressional Affairs; Mr. Mike Kendall, senior associate general counsel, Legal Affairs; Mr. Marcelo Araujo, Senior Vice President, ADA Science Institute

Background

The Council discussed the VET CARE bill, H.R. 2628, which would establish a pilot program providing periodontal care for qualified veterans diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. Unlike earlier versions of the VET CARE bill, H.R. 2628 also includes a new provision that will allow for the VA staff to refer patients to community dental partners or programs like Missions of Mercy. The bill was introduced in the House by Congressman Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and dentist members of Congress Jefferson Van Drew (D-NJ) and Drew Ferguson (R-GA) are among the bill's cosponsors. The pilot program that would be created if VET CARE becomes law was developed with Dr. Marjorie Jeffcoat, and would be designed by a Scientific Steering Committee which could possibly include ADA leaders. The Randomized Controlled Clinical Trials would be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and comply with the high standards of scientific validity and medical ethics of all VA Department of Research projects. The scientific evaluators would be periodontists, general dentists, and hygienists.

Goal of this Legislation

The Council discussed the overall goal of H.R. 2628 and what is being done regarding healthcare for veterans. There was discussion on what stance the ADA should take on this bill. Some members had advised obtaining more research and comments from the work groups that handle these issues and seeing if there is any language that should be tweaked in the bill. The Council noted that there is no express ADA policy on matters addressed in the bill. However, the Council was assured that from a legal standpoint it was not necessary to have an express policy position on the matter being considered as long as the CGA's recommendation does not run contrary to ADA policy and is supported by ADA leadership, and falls within the ADA's purpose and mission. During the August meeting, the Council will discuss possible policy on veterans' health issues.

Resolution in Support of the VET CARE Bill

After completion of the discussion, Dr. Messina, moved a motion and the CGA voted unanimously to support the bill. With the approval of ADA leadership, the CGA recommends the ADA move to support the legislation as soon as feasible.

- **Resolved**, that the CGA supports the VET CARE bill, H.R. 2628, and recommends that the ADA actively seek passage of the legislation. And be it further,
- **Resolved**, that the CGA contact the Council on Scientific Affairs, (CSA), for input on the design of the study as described in the legislation. Furthermore, as the legislation progresses through Congress, if the CSA has reservations or suggestions for improvement of the study design, the CGA will seek to work with the sponsors of the legislation to amend or modify the study so that the best scientific result is achieved.

Post-approval discussions led to the recommendation for a letter from the ADA President in support of the legislation. The Council also discussed that the CGA support for the legislation is not conditional upon CSA approval of the study design. The CGA will continue to work with CSA in the future, as CSA may not examine the bill for some time.

Meeting adjourned Tuesday June 4, 2019 at 5:33pm.