

February 12, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader Schumer, and Leader McConnell:

The American Dental Association (ADA) and its 162,000 members thanks Congress for its continued efforts to combat the challenging effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge Congress to consider another coronavirus relief package and want to highlight a number of policies that are crucial to ensuring the safety and economic stability of dental practices across the country. Additional relief will also help to guarantee that patients receive the oral health care that is critical to maintaining their overall health.

The 116th Congress took many important steps to improve overall economic stability, but the dental community continues to face challenges that require action and assistance. We respectfully request that the 117th Congress consider assisting dentists and their patients by:

- Giving temporary and targeted liability protection to small businesses that follow applicable public health guidelines during the pandemic, including dentists who conduct Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved tests and administer FDA-approved vaccines.
- Making changes to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), including:
 - Providing start-up small businesses (those that opened after February 15, 2020) with access to PPP and other federal small business loans/grants; and
 - Ensuring that lenders are not requiring overly burdensome documentation to apply for a second draw PPP loan.
- Allowing borrowers with public and privately held student loans to defer interest and payments for the duration of the proposed emergency.
- Providing tax credits to small businesses for the purchase of additional personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety improvements to the office.
- Addressing health workforce shortages and disparities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic through additional funding for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC).
- Establishing a dispute/appeals process for providers to accommodate issues during the application process for the Provider Relief Fund (PRF).
- Increasing the federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) to strengthen Medicaid programs during the public health emergency while requiring states to keep their current benefit structure in place if accepting additional funding.

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- Supplying additional funding to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) for oral health care services.
- Directing the Department of Labor to allow certain small businesses, including dental practices, to be exempted from unreasonable 'unsafe workplaces' guidance if PPE is already mandated, vaccinations have already been offered to staff and the already documented low infection rate in dental offices is maintained.

Thank you for your important work on these issues. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact Chris Tampio at 202-789-5178 or tampioc@ada.org. Additional information is also available at ADA.org/covid19advocacy.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Klemmedson, D.D.S., M.D.
President

Kathleen T. O'Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director

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