

May 27, 2021

The Honorable Karen Bass  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2021 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Bass:

On behalf of the 162,000 members of the American Dental Association (ADA), we are writing to express our support for H.R. 1794, the Foster Youth Dental Act. As an organization dedicated to improving the oral health of the public, the ADA agrees on the importance of ensuring that this underserved population receives quality and affordable dental care.

While foster youth have coverage under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit through age 21, they often lose coverage after that because of the limited Medicaid oral health benefits most states offer to adults. And although under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), young adults can stay on their parents' insurance until age 26, foster youth do not have that option. Additionally, foster youth often move from home to home and location to location, which can leave them without a permanent source of dental care (a dental home), which is critical for good oral health care.

H.R. 1794 would expand Medicaid oral health coverage by increasing eligibility from 21 to 25 years of age for former youth who are eligible for the foster youth Medicaid pathway. It would also help ensure access by providing enhanced reimbursement for dentists. States would be required to establish outreach programs for dentists, as well as programs to increase foster youth enrollment. Lastly, the bill would ensure that foster youth who move between states do not lose their coverage.

Thank you again for your support of foster youth and oral health. The ADA looks forward to continuing to work with you. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Jennifer Fisher at [fisherj@ada.org](mailto:fisherj@ada.org).

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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