

March 7, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden  
Chairman  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2322A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Walden and Ranking Member Pallone,

On behalf of the American Dental Association (ADA) and our 161,000 member dentists, we request that as Congress considers legislation amending the Affordable Care Act, it prioritizes oral health services in its reform efforts.

Studies show that good oral health yields savings in future medical and dental costs, particularly among individuals with comorbidities such as diabetes and heart disease. Further, evidence shows that children with poor oral health are three times more likely to miss school than those who receive appropriate preventive care.

As the legislation is marked up, please address these issues of importance for ensuring good oral health in America:

#### **Medicaid Reform**

- Assure **comprehensive oral health services for children.**
- **Help states preserve adult dental benefits** by allowing the use of any innovation funds in states that wish to expand coverage.
- Instruct the Secretary of HHS to provide **guidance to State Medicaid providers regarding access to oral health services** for beneficiaries.

#### **Dental Plan Transparency**

- **Promote transparency** of dental plans to support consumer awareness on (1) premium and benefits, (2) out-of-pocket costs, (3) network adequacy, and (4) participating health care professionals.
- **Ensure consumer protection measures** (e.g. effective appeal procedures) are required for dental benefit plans, as well as **first-dollar coverage for preventive dental services.**

#### **Using Pre-Tax Dollars to Cover Expenses**

- **Expand the availability and flexibility of Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs).**
- **Preserve the current tax exclusions** for employer-provided medical and dental plans.
- Allow **tax credits** to be utilized in purchasing both medical and dental coverage.

If you have any questions or require additional information concerning the above request, please contact Ms. Mindi Walker, [walkerm@ada.org](mailto:walkerm@ada.org) or (202) 898-2404.

Sincerely,

/s/

Gary Roberts, D.D.S.  
President

/s/

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

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