

April 20, 2007

The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd  
United States Senate  
448 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Dodd,

On behalf of nearly 5,400 dental residents, the 17 undersigned organizations representing academic dentistry and the dental profession write to endorse the Medical Education Affordability Act (S. 1066). Your bill would assist dental residents engaged in rigorous dental residency training throughout the United States to manage their student loan debt while in training.

Dental residency programs increase access to oral health care for a broad array of patients. Approximately 2,800 new graduates and other dentists who have been in practice choose to specialize or advance their training in general dentistry by enrolling in dental residency programs. A dentist may not provide specialty dental care without having successfully completed the required training. There are nine recognized dental specialties: Dental Public Health, Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, Oral Surgery, Orthodontics, Periodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, and Prosthodontics as well as two programs in general dentistry, General Practice Residency and Advanced Education in General Dentistry. Specialty programs last from a minimum of 14 months for Dental Public Health up to 54 months for Oral Surgery. Programs in general dentistry range from 12 to 24 months.

Dental residents make both personal and financial sacrifices to complete their education in a dental specialty or general dentistry. In 2006 dental school graduates carried \$145,263 when they entered residencies and they faced additional educational costs while undergoing advanced training. While some dental residents pay tuition and fees others earn modest stipends. In any case, dental residents need student loan deferment while engaged in residency training.

Limiting education debt, developing a diverse oral health care workforce and bringing new dental practices including dental specialty practices to communities is vital in addressing the problem of disparities in access to dental care. For these reasons we are pleased to support your bill which provides needed relief by extending the economic hardship deferment for the duration of residency training. Thank you again for offering such an important proposal at the outset of the legislative session. If we can offer any assistance, through testimony or other means, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry  
American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology  
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry  
American Academy of Periodontology  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association of Endodontists  
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  
American Dental Hygienists Association  
American Student Dental Association  
Hispanic Dental Association  
National Dental Association  
Special Care Dentistry Association

**Primary Contacts - Dental Organizations**

<p><b>Academy of General Dentistry</b> Mr. Daniel Buksa, Associate Executive Director, Public Affairs &amp; Administration 211 E. Chicago Ave., Suite 900, Chicago, IL 60611-1999 P: 312-440-4328 <a href="mailto:daniel.buksa@agd.org">daniel.buksa@agd.org</a> <a href="http://www.agd.org/">http://www.agd.org/</a></p>	<p><b>American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology</b> Dr. James Geist, President P.O. Box 1010, Evans, GA 30809-1010 <a href="mailto:geistjr@udmercy.edu">geistjr@udmercy.edu</a> <a href="http://www.aaomr.org/">http://www.aaomr.org/</a></p>	<p><b>American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry</b> Mr. Scott Litch, Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel 211 E. Chicago Ave. Suite 1700, Chicago, IL 60611-2663 P: 312-337-2169 ext. 29 <a href="mailto:slitch@aapd.org">slitch@aapd.org</a> <a href="http://www.aapd.org">www.aapd.org</a></p>
<p><b>American Academy of Periodontology</b> Ms. Cheryl Parker, Education and Liaison Director 737 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60611- 6660 P: 312-573-3231 <a href="mailto:cheryl@perio.org">cheryl@perio.org</a> <a href="http://www.perio.org/">http://www.perio.org/</a></p>	<p><b>American Associations for Dental Research</b> Dr. Daryl Pritchard, Director of Legislative Affairs 1619 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3406 P: 703-548-0066 F: 703-548-1883 <a href="mailto:dpritchard@iadr.org">dpritchard@iadr.org</a> <a href="http://www.dentalresearch.org">www.dentalresearch.org</a></p>	<p><b>American Association of Endodontists</b> Ms. Beverly Albert, Assistant Executive Director for Education 211 E. Chicago Ave., Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60611 P: 312-266-7255 <a href="mailto:balbert@aae.org">balbert@aae.org</a> <a href="http://www.aae.org">www.aae.org</a></p>
<p><b>American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons</b> Dr. Robert Rinaldi, Executive Director 9700 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Rosemont, IL 60018 P: 847-678-6200 <a href="mailto:brinaldi@aaoms.org">brinaldi@aaoms.org</a> <a href="http://www.aaoms.org/">http://www.aaoms.org/</a></p>	<p><b>American Association of Orthodontists</b> Mr. Chris Vranas, Executive Director 401 N. Lindbergh Blvd., Saint Louis, MO, 63141-7816 P: 800-787-2444 <a href="mailto:cvranas@aaortho.org">cvranas@aaortho.org</a> <a href="http://www.aaomembers.org/">www.aaomembers.org/</a></p>	<p><b>American Association of Public Health Dentistry</b> Ms. Pam Tolsen, Executive Director 3085 Stevenson Dr., Suite 200, Springfield, IL 62703 P: 217-529-6941 <a href="mailto:pam4assn@assn-srvs.com">pam4assn@assn-srvs.com</a> <a href="http://www.aaphd.org/">http://www.aaphd.org/</a></p>
<p><b>American College of Prosthodontists</b> Ms. Nancy Deal Chandler, Executive Director 211 East Chicago Ave. Suite 1000, Chicago, IL 60611 P: 312-573-1260 ext. 230 <a href="mailto:dchandler@prosthodontics.org">dchandler@prosthodontics.org</a> <a href="http://www.prosthodontics.org/">http://www.prosthodontics.org/</a></p>	<p><b>American Dental Association</b> Mr. Michael Graham, Senior Congressional Lobbyist, American Dental Association 1111 14<sup>th</sup> St. NW, WDC 20005 P: 202-789-5167 <a href="mailto:Grahamm@ADA.org">Grahamm@ADA.org</a> <a href="http://www.ADA.org">www.ADA.org</a></p>	<p><b>American Dental Education Association</b> Ms. Gina Luke, Director of Legislative Policy Development 1400 K St., NW, Suite 1100, WDC 20005 P: 202-289-7201 F: 202-289-7204 <a href="mailto:luke@ADEA.org">luke@ADEA.org</a> <a href="http://www.ADEA.org">www.ADEA.org</a></p>
<p><b>American Dental Hygienists Association</b> Ms. Karen Sealander, Lobbyist McDermott Will &amp; Emery LLP 600 13th St., N.W., WDC 20005 P: 202-756-8024 <a href="mailto:ksealander@mwe.com">ksealander@mwe.com</a> <a href="http://www.adha.org/">http://www.adha.org/</a></p>	<p><b>American Student Dental Association</b> Ms. Nancy Honeycutt, Executive Director 211 E. Chicago Ave., Suite 700, Chicago, IL 60611 P: 312-440-2848 <a href="mailto:Nancy@ASDAnet.org">Nancy@ASDAnet.org</a> <a href="http://www.asdanet.org/">http://www.asdanet.org/</a></p>	<p><b>Hispanic Dental Association</b> Dr. Ernest Garcia, President 3085 Stevenson Dr., Ste. 200, Springfield, IL 62703 P: 800/852-7921 <a href="mailto:elqjrdds@comcast.net">elqjrdds@comcast.net</a> <a href="http://www.hdassoc.org/">http://www.hdassoc.org/</a></p>
<p><b>National Dental Association</b> Dr. Robert Johns, Executive Director 3517 16th St., NW, WDC 20010 P: 202.588.1697 <a href="mailto:rsjohns@ndaonline.org">rsjohns@ndaonline.org</a> <a href="mailto:khoward@ndaonline.org">khoward@ndaonline.org</a> <a href="http://www.ndaonline.org">www.ndaonline.org</a></p>	<p><b>Special Care Dentistry Association</b> Ms. Kristen Smith, Executive Director 401 N. Michigan Ave., 22nd Fl., Chicago, IL 60611 P: 312-673-4880 <a href="mailto:ksmith@scedaonline.org">ksmith@scedaonline.org</a> <a href="http://www.scedaonline.org/">http://www.scedaonline.org/</a></p>	