



American Association of Oral
and Maxillofacial Surgeons

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July 10, 2007

The Honorable John Dingell
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dingell:

On behalf of the entire membership of the American Association Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) I applaud your introduction of the Children's Dental Health Improvement Act (H.R. 1781). The AAOMS enthusiastically supports this legislation as we feel it is an important step towards closing the gaps in basic preventive oral health care in Medicaid and SCHIP programs.

As you know, basic oral health care is often overlooked as a priority in our current health care system. Thousands of children endure treatable pain and suffer from dental ailments that can result in lifelong damage. The good news is that most of these conditions can be prevented by expanding coverage and increasing the number of providers to treat the underserved, which is why we are proud to support H.R. 1781.

This legislation addresses several vital elements that we feel are in need of repair:

- Closing the gaps in the current SCHIP program by ensuring that SCHIP will cover dental health care even if a child is partially covered by another dental care plan.
- Providing financial incentives and planning grants to states to improve delivery of care for dental services.
- Increasing the number of providers in underserved areas in order to increase access to dental care.

The AAOMS looks forward to working with you to promote passage of the Children's Dental Health Improvement Act. Thank you for your leadership on this issue and for your introduction of this vital legislation.

Sincerely,

W. Mark Tucker, D.D.S.
President