



**American Association of Oral
and Maxillofacial Surgeons**

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W. Mark Tucker, DDS
President

Robert C. Rinaldi, PhD, CAE
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May 14, 2007

The Honorable Carolyn McCarthy
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for the CARES Act

Dear Congresswoman McCarthy:

On behalf of the entire American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS), I applaud your leadership in introducing the Children's Access to Reconstructive Evaluation and Surgery (CARES) Act. As you know, AAOMS strongly supports this legislation to ensure that children receive the care they need when faced with congenital deformities.

Oral and maxillofacial surgeons donate thousands of hours each year performing corrective surgery on children suffering from congenital deformities--such as cleft lip and palate--who live in medically underserved areas or are uninsured. However, thousands of children who are currently covered under health insurance plans are not able to receive corrective surgery because their claims are being denied by insurers on the basis that the procedure is deemed "cosmetic." Craniofacial anomalies, cleft lip and palate being the most common, might appear to be only cosmetic but often impede a child's daily function, such as chewing food and normal speech.

AAOMS shares your belief and vision that corrective surgery for craniofacial anomalies is medically necessary and should be defined as reconstructive surgery rather than cosmetic surgery.

The oral and maxillofacial surgical community thanks you for your leadership on this important pediatric issue and looks forward to assisting you in moving this very necessary legislation forward.

Sincerely,

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