



December 14, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chairwoman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Aderholt and Baldwin and Ranking Members DeLauro and Moore Capito:

On behalf of the American Dental Association, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Dental Education Association, and the American Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research, as you continue to negotiate funding for fiscal year 2024 (FY 2024) Labor-HHS appropriations bill, we respectfully request your consideration for programs vital to dentistry and oral health. We thank you for your commitment to dentistry and oral health over the years, and we urge Congress to continue its support of programs critical to the nation's oral health.

**Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Division of Oral Health** – Thank you for including funding in the FY 2024 House and Senate L-HHS appropriation bills. The Division of Oral Health, located in CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, supports states and territories to reduce cavities and oral disease rates among vulnerable populations. The CDC's investments have significantly contributed to the reduction of oral diseases in underserved communities, as exemplified by the noteworthy 25% decrease in tooth decay among children and adults through the expansion of community water fluoridation. However, as we celebrate these achievements, it is crucial to acknowledge the persistent challenges that oral diseases pose. These conditions, including cavities, gum diseases, and oral cancers, escalate in complexity over time, affecting people at every stage of life. The personal and financial burden they place on individuals

and healthcare systems is substantial. Moreover, oral diseases are chronic in nature and interlinked with the management of other chronic conditions. While CDC funding supports every state health department for chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and tobacco control programs, it funds less than half of states for oral disease prevention programs. This leaves 30 states and territories without adequate resources to meet the oral health needs of vulnerable populations. Recognizing the connection between oral health and overall health, our proposed efforts will allow the Division to provide comprehensive support to more state health departments in oral health initiatives, improving access to effective interventions and care coordination for chronic diseases associated with poor oral health. **For fiscal year 2024, we urge you to support no less than \$20,250,000 for the CDC Division of Oral Health to help strengthen the nation's oral health infrastructure.**

**HRSA Title VII Oral Health Training Programs** – Our organizations applaud Congress for including funding for Title VII primary care dental training cluster in the most recent House and Senate marks. We are pleased Congress understands the importance of these programs and their impact on underserved communities. Adequate funding for general and pediatric dental residency programs and state oral health workforce grants enables dental professionals to enhance their knowledge and skills in the field of dentistry and provide primary oral health care services in some of the nation's most remote and underserved communities.

- Title VII is the only federal program focused on improving the supply, distribution, and diversity of the dental workforce.
- In Academic Year 2021-2022, grantees of the Training in General, Pediatric, and Public Health Dentistry and Dental Hygiene Program trained 7,132 dental and dental hygiene students in pre-doctoral training degree programs; 711 dental residents and fellows in advanced primary care dental residency and fellowship training programs; and many more dental faculty members in faculty development activities and programs.<sup>1</sup>
- By providing advanced training opportunities to oral health professionals, these programs play a critical role in preparing the dental workforce to meet the evolving health care needs of our nation.

Also, we support the continuation of funding for section 748 post-doctoral training grants, predoctoral dental grants, and dental faculty loan repayment program (DFLRP) grants and the initiation of a new DFLRP grant cycle with a preference for pediatric dentistry faculty supervising dental students or residents and providing clinical services in dental clinics located in dental schools, hospitals, and community-based affiliated sites. **For fiscal year 2024, we urge you to support no less than \$42,673,000, which includes an equitable allocation of no less than \$13 million each for Pediatric and General Dentistry programs, and no less than \$15 million for State Oral Health Workforce Grants.**

**HRSA Title VII Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP)** – Title VII pathway initiatives like the Health Careers Opportunity Program are crucial to fostering diversity within the health care workforce and creating pathways for individuals, especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, to pursue and succeed in health professions. Recent challenges in the recruitment and retention of the dental workforce threaten both the health of dental practices and the health of American patients who rely on an adequate dental workforce for access to oral health care. According to ADA's Health Policy Institute (HPI), more than one-third of dentists are actively recruiting dental hygienists and dental assistants, while almost nine out of ten dentists report that recruiting for these positions is extremely challenging.<sup>2</sup> Dental practice difficulties limits the number of patients dentists can see and this problem is especially acute in underserved communities, which

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health and Human Services: [FY 2024 Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees](#). March 2023

<sup>2</sup> Health Policy Institute: [Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry](#). November 2003

underscores the need for pathway programs to ensure the future strength and diversity of our nation's oral health workforce. **For fiscal year 2024, we urge you to support no less than the Senate recommendation of \$16 million for HRSA's Health Careers and Opportunity Program.**

**HRSA Ryan White Part F Dental** –The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program is the nation's largest federal program funded exclusively for low-income, underinsured and uninsured people living with HIV/AIDS. The Dental Reimbursement Program (DRP) aims to reduce unmet dental needs in the HIV/AIDS population and clinically train dental students, dental hygiene students and dental residents to care for people with HIV/AIDS. The Community-Based Dental Partnership Program (CBDPP) increases the number of dental professionals providing care to patients with HIV/AIDS in underserved rural and urban areas through educational and clinical training. Funding for these programs is critical to ensure people living with HIV/AIDS receive regular dental care and mitigate the development of potentially life-threatening infections that manifest orally. **For fiscal year 2024, we urge you to support the Senate recommendation of no less than \$13,620,000 for the Dental Reimbursement Program and no less than \$34,886,000 for the Community Based Dental Partnership Program.**

**The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR)** – We applaud Congress for the proposed increase for the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) in the most recent House and Senate mark. NIDCR, one of 27 Institutes and Centers of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), is the largest institution in the world exclusively dedicated to researching ways to improve dental, oral, and craniofacial health for all. Over the last 75 years since NIDCR was founded, the agency has funded research leading to improvements in oral health for millions of Americans. NIDCR investments continue to show promise in multiple areas impacting the dental and craniofacial complex and overall health of Americans, including pain biology and management, reducing opioid use, temporomandibular disorders (TMD), regenerative medicine, and in developing early diagnostics and assessing human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine efficacy for oral and pharyngeal cancers. Additionally, NIDCR is dedicated to building an inclusive and diverse community in its research training and employment programs. The Institute has utilized strategies and made notable advancements increasing the number of individuals from underrepresented groups entering and continuing along NIDCR research career pathways. In recent years, the federal government's annual investment in NIDCR has not kept pace with biomedical inflation, nor overall funding increases for NIH despite its notable scientific accomplishments. **For fiscal year 2024, we urge you to support no less than \$520,163,000 for the advancement of research at the NIDCR.**

For your consideration, attached is a full list of our priorities delineating the House and Senate Appropriations Committee marks with comparisons to the FY 2023 enacted funding level.

We look forward to meeting with your staff to discuss these critical programs. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Fisher with ADA at [fisherj@ada.org](mailto:fisherj@ada.org); Scott Litch with AAPD at [slitch@aapd.org](mailto:slitch@aapd.org); Timothy Leeth with ADEA at [leetht@adea.org](mailto:leetht@adea.org); or Yehuda Sugarman with AADOCR at [ysugarman@iadr.org](mailto:ysugarman@iadr.org).

Sincerely,

American Dental Association  
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry  
American Dental Education Association  
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research

**FY 2024 Funding Requests for Federal Oral Health Programs  
Supported by the ADA, AAPD, ADEA and AADOCR**

<b>Program</b>	<b>FY 2023 Enacted</b>	<b>FY 2024 House (as of Nov. 2)</b>	<b>FY 2024 Senate</b>
CDC – Division of Oral Health	\$20,250,000	\$20,250,000	\$20,250,000
HRSA Title VII General and Pediatric Dental Residencies and Dental Faculty Loan Repayment Program	\$13,000,000 each	\$13,000,000 each	\$13,000,000 each
State Oral Health Workforce	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$14,000,000
Total	\$42,673,000	\$42,673,000	\$42,673,000
HRSA – Maternal Child Health – Special Projects of Regional and National Significance	\$5,250,000	\$5,250,000	\$5,250,000
HRSA – Area Health Education Centers	\$47,000,000	\$47,000,000	\$47,000,000
HRSA – Health Careers Opportunity Program	\$16,000,000	\$0	\$16,000,000
HRSA - Ryan White Dental (Part F)	\$13,620,000	\$0	\$13,620,000
NIH – National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research	\$520,163,000	\$520,163,000	\$520,163,000