

August 9, 2018

Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

The dental professional organizations listed below, as members of the Organized Dentistry Coalition, are writing to express our strong support for S. 3016, the Action for Dental Health Act of 2018, to expand access to dental care in underserved, rural and Native American communities. In February, the House passed the Action for Dental Health Act by a vote of 387-13, on July 25th the Senate HELP Committee passed the bill by unanimous consent, and we urge you to take up this measure on the Senate floor.

The bill, sponsored by Senators Booker, Cassidy, Hirono and Scott, will allow organizations to qualify for oral health grants to support activities that improve oral health education and dental disease prevention and develop and expand outreach programs that facilitate establishing dental homes for children and adults, including the elderly, blind and disabled.

The legislation would support initiatives that have the greatest impact on dental access disparities, including:

- Supporting charitable programs like Give Kids A Smile and Missions of Mercy, through which dentists directly provide care to disadvantaged children and adults who are suffering from lack of dental care today;
- Reducing the number of people who visit the emergency room for dental conditions, by referring them to dental practices, where they can receive proper dental care;
- Expanding access to care for the vulnerable elderly in nursing homes;
- Ensuring more Americans have access to drinking water with fluoride; and
- Strengthening collaborations with other health professionals and organizations.

On behalf of our member dentists and their patients, we express our strong support for the Action for Dental Health Act of 2018.

Sincerely,

American Dental Association
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Academy of Periodontology
American Association of Endodontists
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Orthodontists
American Association of Women Dentists
American Dental Education Association
American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists