



CALIFORNIA SOCIETY OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

The Honorable Karen Bass
Speaker of the California State Assembly
Sent by Fascimilie Transmission 916-319-2147

Dear Assembly Member Bass:

As the Assembly Budget Committee considers measures to address the worsening state budget deficit, the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry urges the legislature to maintain the Adult Denti-Cal program for reasons that make sound economic sense as well as compassionate public policy.

Elimination of all but emergency dental services to adults served by state Medi-Cal will not only have severe adverse health consequences for low-income adults, but will also have the following unintended consequences for children:

- When parents do not maintain at least one annual dental visit, children in their household are 13 times less likely to visit a dentist the same year. Numerous studies confirm that children not receiving annual dental visits, early diagnosis of dental problems, and regular preventive care services such as topical fluoride application and placement of dental sealants (all covered benefits under the Federally-mandated Medicaid childrens program) will experience greater future oral health problems and greater future state funding.
- There is a demonstrable direct linkage between maternal oral health and the incidence of early childhood dental decay because of the transmissible and communicable nature of the oral bacteria responsible for dental decay.
- **The Governor's proposal to eliminate optional adult dental benefits under our state Medicaid program will only adversely effect children's oral health and, at the same time, result in greater future obligations to the state's general fund.**

We understand that difficult decisions must be made to balance a state budget and still address the urgent healthcare needs of our state's most vulnerable populations. Please consider the immediate health consequences for adults and children and the long-term economic consequences to the state of your decisions.

A. Jeffrey Wood, DDS
President, California Society of Pediatric Dentistry

c: Officers and Directors, California Society of Pediatric Dentistry
Dr. Paul Reggiardo, Public Policy Advocate, California Society of Pediatric Dentistry
Dr. Ray Stewart, Executive Director California Society of Pediatric Dentistry

The California Society of Pediatric Dentistry is the professional membership organization representing California's nearly 600 pediatric dental providers, educators and researchers. Our members provide primary and specialty care to infants, children, adolescents and patients with special medical and developmental needs. The mission of the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry is to advocate for optimal oral health and general welfare of infants, children, and adolescents.