

# Support Bipartisan Call for Investment in Pediatric Dental Care

Dear Colleague,

We invite you join us in sending the attached bipartisan letter to House Appropriations Committee, requesting continued support for programs that address the unmet oral health needs of America's children in the Fiscal Year 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies funding bill.

Dental decay has become the most common chronic childhood illness in the United States, even though it is easily preventable. Lack of access to affordable pediatric dental care plays a large role in this crisis. By providing modest investments in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HSRA) pediatric dentistry training programs, we can help ensure that highly-trained pediatric dentists are able to treat patients suffering from dental decay, especially those in underserved communities where early childhood dental disease runs rampant.

If you have any questions, or would like to sign on to the letter, please contact Robert Dougherty ([Robert.Dougherty@mail.house.gov](mailto:Robert.Dougherty@mail.house.gov)) with Rep. Julia Brownley or Walton Chaney ([Walton.Chaney@mail.house.gov](mailto:Walton.Chaney@mail.house.gov)) with Rep. Gregg Harper. Please see the full text of the letter below.

Sincerely,

JULIA BROWNLEY  
Member of Congress

GREGG HARPER  
Member of Congress

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, HHS, Education  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, HHS, Education  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you work to develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill, we ask for your continued support for programs crucial to addressing the unmet oral health needs of America's children. Dental decay is the most common chronic childhood disease in the United States, even though it is easily preventable. In addition, children from low income families have three to five times the level of untreated dental disease compared to their more affluent peers. Children with chronic dental pain face difficulty in school and in their everyday lives, negatively impacting their development for years to come.

Pediatric dentists are crucial to meeting the nation's health workforce needs. We urge the Subcommittee to include funding for Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII pediatric dentistry training at no less than \$12 million, including support for HRSA to continue funding grant opportunities for dental faculty loan repayment consistent with FY 2017 award criteria. We also urge continued robust funding for the overall primary care dental cluster (Section 748) and related dental programs.

This modest investment helps ensure highly-trained pediatric dentists can treat underserved populations and practice in underserved areas, thereby helping to stem the tide of early childhood dental disease. We thank the Committee for supporting this funding in the past, and request continued support in FY 2019.

Sincerely,

---

JULIA BROWNLEY  
Member of Congress

---

GREGG HARPER  
Member of Congress