

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you work to develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, we ask for your continued support for programs crucial to addressing the unmet oral health needs of America's children. Specifically, we urge continued funding for Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Title VII pediatric dentistry training at no less than \$14 million, including support for dental faculty loan repayment grants, and robust funding for Section 748 primary care dental programs.

Pediatric dentists are crucial to meeting the unmet oral health needs of children, many of whom come from underserved populations. Dental decay is easily preventable, and yet remains a persistent chronic disease among many American children. Left untreated, decay can cause pain and infection that undermines eating, speaking, and learning during critical stages of childhood development. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that tooth decay affects 1 in 5 children ages 5-11, and one in seven (13 percent) adolescents ages 12-19. Untreated tooth decay is more than twice as likely for children in low-income families, compared to those in higher-income households.

HRSA Title VII programs are an important tool in meeting the unmet oral health needs of many of these families. Continued funding for pediatric dentistry training programs helps more dental students enter the field prepared to address these needs by treating children covered by Medicaid and CHIP and practicing in under-served areas. Additionally, dental faculty repayment programs incentivize professionals to help train future practitioners to meet such needs.

We thank the Subcommittee for its support of these programs in past years and urge continued funding to further stem the tide of preventable childhood dental disease.

Sincerely,



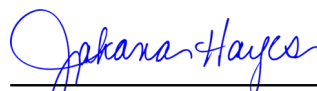
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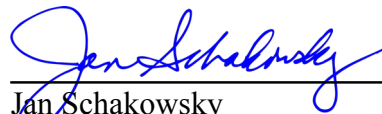
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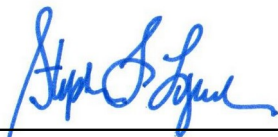
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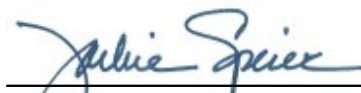
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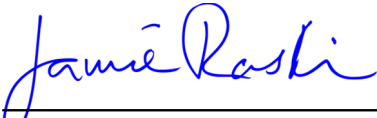
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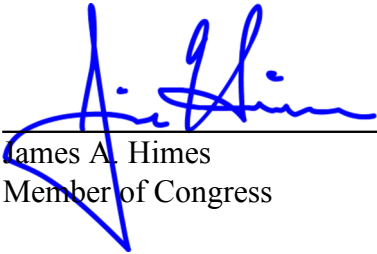
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