

October 12, 2009

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy:

Last month the American Dental Association (ADA), which represents over 157,000 dentists in the United States, wrote to you in strong support of S. 1681, the Health Insurance Industry Antitrust Enforcement Act of 2009. Repealing the McCarran-Ferguson Act is a priority issue with our members.

It is our understanding that you will soon hold a hearing on S. 1681. The ADA would like the opportunity to testify at the hearing.

Today, virtually all policy makers recognize the need to reduce the rising cost of health care coverage and furnish consumers with more coverage options. When insurance competitors are permitted to work jointly, consumers are less likely to see as much innovation and variety in the marketplace as they would in an atmosphere of robust competition for their business. Such unfair practice has undoubtedly interfered with the delivery of dental care which has had a negative effect on dental patients.

Requiring the health insurance industry to play by the same rules as other industries in our country will promote competition among health and malpractice insurance plans, benefiting both employers and individual consumers. The ADA believes that a fair and open market is the best means of ensuring the delivery of high quality and cost-conscious health care. Your bill effectively addresses the anticompetitive conduct that must be remedied to assure that purchasers of health insurance coverage can receive the full value of the coverage they seek in a fair and open marketplace.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you as this measure moves forward. Ms. Jennifer Fisher at fisherj@ada.org or 202.789.5160 will follow up with your staff.

Sincerely,



Ronald L. Tankersley, D.D.S.
President



Kathleen T. O'Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director

RLT:KTO:mg