

May 15, 2023

The Honorable Buddy Carter
U.S. House of Representatives
2432 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Yvette Clarke
U.S. House of Representatives
2058 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pete Sessions
U.S. House of Representatives
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Carter, Clarke, and Sessions:

On behalf of our collective dental organizations, we are writing to thank you for introducing H.R. 1385, the Dental and Optometric Care (DOC) Access Act of 2023. We offer our strong support for this bipartisan legislation as we believe that patients are adversely affected by provisions in dental insurance plans that dictate what a doctor may charge a plan enrollee for services not covered by the plan.

As you know, H.R. 1385 would prohibit “non-covered services” provisions in dental and vision plans. It is unreasonable for dental plans to set fees for services in which the plans have no financial liability, and that is why 45 states have enacted laws that limit interference with the doctor-patient relationship when the doctor delivers services insurers do not cover. However, a federal effort is needed as many dental plans are regulated on the federal rather than state level.

The current landscape adversely impacts competition in the dental plan market, which is dominated by only a few national carriers in many states, and shifts costs to patients who are paying for their coverage out of their own pockets or are seeing a dentist out-of-network. H.R. 1385 will provide greater access to high-quality care by helping to curb anti-patient and anti-competitive practices of dental insurance plans. This legislation is crucial to bring needed balance to contract negotiations between providers, who are often small business owners, and large dental insurance companies.

Passage of H.R. 1385 would balance the scales and bring equity to insurer/provider contracting at the federal level. On behalf of our all our members and their patients, we would like to thank you again for your support of H.R. 1385. We look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Natalie Hales at (202) 898-2404 or halesn@ada.org.

Sincerely,

American Dental Association
Academy of General Dentistry
American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
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 College of Prosthodontics
American Dental Education Association
American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists
American Student Dental Association