

July 18, 2007

The Hon. Richard T. Moore, Chairman
Senate Committee on Health Care Financing
The State House, Rm. 311
Boston, MA 02133

The Hon. Patricia A. Walrath
House Committee on Health Care Financing
The State House, Rm. 236
Boston, MA 02133

Re:S. 656, “An Act Expanding Access to Dental Coverage”

Dear Chairman Moore and Chairwoman Walrath:

Senate bill 656, “An Act Expanding Access to Dental Coverage,” will provide dental health care benefits to those Commonwealth Care plan enrollees with incomes between 101% and 300% of the federal poverty level. Chapter 58 of 2006 mandated that both MassHealth recipients and those Commonwealth Care enrollees with incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty level receive comprehensive dental health care benefits as part of their overall insurance coverage. Therefore, a significant portion of our population does not qualify for these critical services. In order to correct this disparity, I respectfully request that the Committee advance this legislation favorably.

Good oral health is inextricably linked to one’s overall health, and poor oral health can have a profoundly negative impact on an individual’s life. In favorably reporting S. 656, we will establish a commitment to whole body health reform and end this disparity in treatment services. This expansion in coverage will impact the lives of thousands of Massachusetts residents whose income levels do not currently qualify them for dental coverage, but for whom this service would prove tremendously beneficial.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration of this request. I look forward to working with the Committee in promoting and strengthening health care reform in the Commonwealth. As always, should you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Gale D. Candaras
State Senate