



December 2, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Collins, and Vice Chair Murray

On behalf of the American Dental Association, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Dental Education Association, and the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research, we respectfully request your bipartisan support in finalizing the FY 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) bill with strong investments in programs essential to dentistry and oral health. Specifically, we urge you to adopt the higher amount of the House and Senate Committee-approved funding levels for each of the individual programs.

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Division of Oral Health – Thank you for your continued support for the Division of Oral Health, which provides funding to states and territorial health departments to help improve community oral health and reduce oral disease among vulnerable populations. Oral diseases, which range from cavities to oral cancers, progress and become more complex over time, affecting people at every stage of life, and creating a significant personal and financial burden on individuals and healthcare systems. Studies have shown that about 34 million school hours and 92 million work hours are lost yearly due to unplanned or emergency care, and nearly \$46 billion is lost yearly due to untreated oral disease.¹ The CDC's significant investment in oral health has helped reduce the incidence of oral disease in underserved communities. For example, its efforts to expand community water fluoridation have lowered tooth decay by at least 25% in both children and adults. We are deeply concerned about staff reductions and the potential

¹ CDC Division of Oral Health: [About the Division of Oral Health | National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion \(NCCDPHP\) | CDC](#)

impact on the Division's ability to continue its important work. Our proposal aims to protect the Division's capacity with adequate staffing and resources to advance effective interventions and strengthen care coordination, particularly for chronic diseases linked to poor oral health.

HRSA Title VII Oral Health Training Programs – We are pleased that Congress recognizes the importance of the Title VII Oral Health Training Program and its positive impact on patients and communities nationwide. Adequate funding for Dental Residencies and the State Oral Health Workforce Grant Program helps dental professionals expand their skills and provide primary oral health care services in some of the nation's most remote and underserved communities. Outcomes for the Academic Year 2022-2023 include:

- Grantees of the training in General, Pediatric, and Public Health Dentistry and Dental Hygiene Program supported 5,540 dental and dental hygiene students and professionals.
- 1.5 million patients reached in medically underserved communities delivered by providers in the Oral Health Training Program.
- 69 percent of graduates were working in medically underserved communities and 20 percent in primary care settings after graduating from their Oral Health Training Program.²

Also, we support the continuation of funding for section 748 post-doctoral training grants, predoctoral dental grants, and dental faculty loan repayment program (DFLRP) grants. This request also includes the initiation of a new DFLRP grant cycle with a preference for pediatric dentistry faculty supervising dental students or residents and providing clinical services in dental clinics located in dental schools, hospitals, and community-based affiliated sites.

Title VII Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) – Title VII pathway initiatives like HRSA's Health Careers Opportunity Program are essential for expanding the health workforce and supporting individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds in health professions. Recent challenges in the recruitment and retention of the dental workforce threaten both the health of dental practices and the health of patients who rely on an adequate dental workforce for access to oral health care. According to ADA's Health Policy Institute (HPI), more than one-third of dentists are actively recruiting dental hygienists and dental assistants, while almost nine out of ten dentists report that recruiting for these positions is extremely challenging.³ Dental practice difficulties limit the number of patients dentists can see and this problem is especially acute in underserved communities, which underscores the need for pathway programs to ensure the future strength and diversity of our nation's oral health workforce.

Ryan White Part F Dental –The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program helps thousands of adults in the United States get important dental care, especially people who need it the most. Two key parts of this program—the Dental Reimbursement Program (DRP) and the Community-Based Dental Partnership Program (CBDPP)—support clinics and dental schools in providing care, working with primary medical providers, and training future dentists to treat people living with HIV. However, the way these programs are funded, and the heavy administrative workload are making it harder for dental schools and clinics to stay involved. The DRP's funding has not significantly increased since the program began, even though the number of people living with HIV is at an all-time high. In 2022, the DRP was only able to repay well under half of the costs reported by the 46 dental institutions that participated. This level of support is not enough for many institutions to continue offering these services. To ensure that people living with HIV can keep getting the dental care they rely on, it is essential to protect and increase funding for these Ryan White HIV/AIDS dental programs.

² Department of Health and Human Services: [FY 2025 Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees](#). March 2024

³ Health Policy Institute: [Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry](#). November 2023

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) – We applaud Congress for its longstanding support of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) and its remarkable achievements. NIDCR, one of 27 Institutes and Centers of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), is the largest institution in the world exclusively dedicated to researching ways to improve dental, oral, and craniofacial health for all. The agency has funded research leading to improvements in oral health for millions of Americans with investments in pain biology and management, reducing opioid use, temporomandibular disorders (TMD), regenerative medicine, developing early diagnostics and assessing human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine efficacy for oral and pharyngeal cancers.

Additionally, we appreciate that both the House and Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations bills preserve NIH's current structure allowing NIDCR to remain a distinct and independent institute dedicated to improving the nation's oral health. We also urge Congress to adopt language included in the Senate Appropriations bill that prohibits the Administration from imposing an arbitrary cap on NIH indirect research costs and limits the Administration's plan to forward-fund most NIH grants.

For your consideration, attached is a full list of our priorities delineating the House and Senate Appropriations Committee marks with comparisons to the FY 2025 enacted funding level.

We look forward to meeting with your staff to discuss these critical programs. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Fisher with ADA at fisherj@ada.org; Scott Litch with AAPD at slitch@aapd.org; Hilary Malawer with ADEA at MalawerH@adea.org; or Yehuda Sugarman with AADOCR at ysugarman@iadr.org.

Sincerely,

American Dental Association
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Dental Education Association
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research

FY 2026 Funding Requests for Federal Oral Health Programs
Supported by the American Dental Association, American Academy of Pediatric
Dentistry, American Dental Education Association and the American Association for
Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research

Program	FY 2025 Final	FY 2026 House	FY 2026 Senate
CDC – Division of Oral Health	\$20,250,000	\$23,250,000	\$20,250,000
HRSA Title VII General and Pediatric Dental Residencies and Dental Faculty Loan Repayment	\$13,000,000 each	\$13,500,000 each	\$13,000,000 each
Total	\$42,673,000	\$43,673,000	\$42,673,000
HRSA – Maternal Child Health – Special Projects of Regional and National Significance	\$5,250,000	\$5,250,000	\$5,250,000
HRSA – Area Health Education Centers	\$47,000,000	\$47,000,000	\$47,000,000
HRSA – Health Careers Opportunity Program	\$16,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000
HRSA - Ryan White Dental (Part F)	\$13,620,000	\$0	\$13,620,000
NIH – National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research	\$520,163,000	\$525,163,000	\$520,163,000