

June 12, 2026

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

On behalf of the Organized Dentistry Coalition (ODC), we write to express our sincere appreciation for your leadership in advancing oral health and for introducing S. 4008, the *Promoting Dental Health Act*. Your longstanding commitment to improving access to oral health care and strengthening public health infrastructure has made an important difference for communities across the country.

Good oral health is essential to overall health and well-being, yet oral disease remains one of the most common chronic conditions in the United States. As outlined in materials supporting this legislation, more than 50 percent of children and more than 25 percent of adults have cavities, nearly 70 million Americans do not have dental insurance, and 64 million people live in Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Oral Health (CDC DOH) plays a critical role in helping states and communities address these challenges through oral health surveillance, school sealant programs, workforce development, public education, and initiatives that support prevention and integration of oral health within broader health systems. These public health strategies complement clinical care and help prevent disease before it begins, particularly for children, families, and communities facing the greatest barriers to care.

The *Promoting Dental Health Act* would reauthorize the CDC DOH for five years, helping sustain and extend evidence-based efforts to improve oral health nationwide. Continued federal support for this work is especially important because the program currently funds only a limited number of states, and some states have not received this core public health support in decades.

This legislation is an important investment in public health infrastructure. Strong state oral health programs are essential for surveillance, prevention, school-based programs, workforce coordination, public education, and cross-sector partnerships that improve health outcomes and reduce long-term costs.

Thank you again for your leadership and your commitment to improving oral health for all Americans. The Organized Dentistry Coalition stands ready to support your efforts to advance this legislation and would welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource as the bill moves forward. If you have any questions, please reach out to Matt Zaborowski at mzaborowski@astdd.org.

Sincerely,

ASTDD Foundation, Inc.
American Dental Association
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
Academy of General Dentistry
American Academy of Orofacial Pain
American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
American Academy of Periodontology
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
American Association of Endodontists
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Orthodontists
American Association of Public Health Dentistry
American Dental Education Association
American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists
American Student Dental Association
National Dental Association
National Network for Oral Health Access
Society of American Indian Dentists